



THE INDEPENDENT

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TODAY'S NEWS

Holiday cancer threat

A rapidly spreading blood cancer may well be linked to sunbathing, researchers have revealed. The cancer, called non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, first appears as a lump in the neck, armpit or groin. Three in ten of sufferers don't survive, and a new "atlas" of the most dangerous cancers shows that cases have risen by 40 per cent in the past decade. This has baffled scientists but they have spotted that it is paralleled by the rise in skin cancers, and is commoner in sunny counties of Britain. There are other possible explanations, including pollution from car exhausts, but sunlight has become the main suspect.

Full story, page 3

Drivers on drugs

More than 100,000 motorists may be driving under the influence of illegal drugs, according to a new survey. The police and the Government are to likely to try out roadside drug tests, after hearing that one-fifth of the people involved in the 465 road traffic deaths in the last 11 months had taken illegal drugs, mainly cannabis.

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Story of an ambush

A Lebanese double-agent betrayed the dozen Israeli soldiers who were killed earlier this month in an ambush by Hizbollah guerrillas. Robert Fisk, our Middle East Correspondent, has discovered that the agent, using a map drawn by Hizbollah commanders, led the Israelis into a grove of orange and lemon trees which had been booby-trapped with mines. There they were slaughtered.

The double-agent, in his mid-thirties, had been working for Israel since 1992 and his cousin was a prisoner in an Israeli jail. But it seems that Hizbollah has been steadily breaking the Israeli army of collaborators - now with deadly results.

On page 15 Fisk tells the inside story of the most carefully laid ambush in Lebanese guerrilla history.

Mothers get jobs

Ministers are delighted by what they claim is the sensational success of their drive to find jobs for single mothers. In an exclusive interview, Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, told us that, under a demonstration project, 180 lone mothers out of 1,000 seen had been helped into work after only one interview. The high hit-rate matters because the scheme could become a model for Labour's planned reform of much more of the welfare state.

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SEEN & HEARD

The Islamic government in the Malaysian state of Kelantan has banned total darkness in cinemas and ordered lighting to be kept on during films to discourage audience members from canoodling in the back row.

"If we can watch television at home with the lights on," said chief minister Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, "then why not in cinemas?"

This bomb was meant to wreck the Irish peace talks. It will fail.



The clearing up operation beginning in Markethill yesterday after a bomb attack, probably by republican dissidents. Several people were treated for shock Photograph: David Rose

A 400lb bomb in Ulster, probably planted by an IRA splinter group, caused substantial damage in a small town.

But as David McKerrick, Ireland Correspondent, writes, it is unlikely to derail the delicate peace talks now getting under way.

The Northern Ireland peace process last night appeared to have absorbed the disruptive political shockwave generated by a major bomb attack on the Co Armagh town of Markethill.

The bombing, which caused extensive damage but no injuries on the town's market day, was viewed as a deliberate attempt by republican dissidents to wreck the talks process. The IRA denied involvement.

The explosion had an almost instantaneous political effect in that at the last moment the Ulster Unionist party dropped a plan to enter the Stormont talks, where Sinn Fein are already ensconced.

Last night, however, the signs were that the party's entry into talks had been postponed rather than abandoned. Most of the participants predict that the party will go in this week, possibly as early as today, thus involving Unionists and republicans in the same process for the first time ever.

But the bombing served notice that paramilitary violence, which has almost disappeared in recent weeks, may continue to be a feature of the scene. It also created controversy as to whether the mainstream republican movement could have had a hand in the bomb.

The device went off in a van shortly before noon in the

largely Protestant town, causing substantial damage to the local RUC station as well as business premises and houses. Security forces later indicated it was a large device containing up to 400lb of explosives.

A half-hour telephone warning call to the BBC gave police time to clear the area and there were no injuries, though several people received treatment for shock. The warning call did not cite a code word and did not mention which organisation had planted the bomb.

The RUC Chief Constable, Ronnie Flanagan, described it as an attack carried out with to-

sumption of violence by the IRA without (claiming) responsibility.

His comments reflect the belief, widespread in the Unionist community, that the attack must have involved the IRA either directly or indirectly. They suspect that the breakaway "Continuity army council", which may have been responsible, operates in effect under licence from the IRA.

But others, including security sources both north and south of the border, do not subscribe to the belief that the CAC operates under the IRA's covert blessing. The CAC has carried

sion of Sinn Fein from the talks, citing both the bomb attack and recent comments by an IRA spokesman. Sinn Fein negotiator Gerry Kelly said yesterday that the bombing was "regrettable and very disappointing," but declined invitations to express condemnation of the bombing.

Inside the talks the British and Irish governments, anxious to make progress, are working on a procedural motion which would have the effect of "parking" the vexed issue of arms decommissioning and moving almost directly into substantive negotiations. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mo Mowlam, said: "This attack may well have been a deliberate attempt to sabotage the talks process. We must not let it succeed." Senator Mitchell described it as "an effort to blow up not just a police station but also the talks process. It cannot be permitted to succeed."

But Peter Robinson MP, keeping up the Democratic Unionist party's sustained attack on the Ulster Unionists, declared: "The dreadful irony of Mr Trimble and his minions submissively creeping towards the door of the Stormont talks and diverting away, at least temporarily, because of this bombing, will not be lost on the Unionist electorate." And ominously the Loyalist Volunteer Force, a dissident group who are in effect the equivalent of the CAC, warned: "The LVF will step up attacks in response to this bombing. No Unionist worth his salt would sit in these talks with Sinn Fein/IRA."

out a number of bombing attacks in recent years: most have failed, though just over a year ago a large bomb at a Fermanagh hotel caused a similar scene of devastation.

Both security and republican sources insist the CAC is not some unacknowledged wing of the IRA but a completely separate organisation which regards Sinn Fein as being so soft as to be traitors to the purist republican cause. It is regarded as occasionally dangerous but incapable of carrying on any sustained campaign of violence.

Within hours of the explosion Mr Trimble despatched a letter to the talks chairman, former US Senator George Mitchell, calling for the expul-



John Whelan

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Tony Blair will take only a small proportion of a £41,000 rise, as pay pressures from teachers, nurses and doctors start to build.

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Key looks this autumn that started on the catwalk and are now available at a High Street store near you.

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Hamish McRae canvasses ideas for what should go in the Millennium Dome, prompted by a recent debate hosted by *The Independent*.

24-28/BUSINESS

Is there anything you can't do at a supermarket checkout? Now, at Tesco, you can bank there too.

29-32/SPORT

Clive Woodward appointment as the new coach of the England Rugby Union team was confirmed yesterday. Chris Hewett profiles a maverick of the sport.

EYE ON WEDNESDAY

In our new tabloid arts and entertainments guide you will find Willard White opening at the English National Opera in *The Flying Dutchman*, reviews of Opera North's *Aida*, Primal Scream in the East End, and *Waterloo Sunset*, a book by Ray Davies of the Kinks. Tom Sutcliffe's TV review is on page 3, and TV listings on the back. Weather is on page 10.

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PEOPLE



Bodyguard who survived Diana crash is conscious and able to communicate

Trevor Rees-Jones, the sole survivor of the car crash which killed Diana, Princess of Wales, has regained full consciousness and "can communicate", it was announced yesterday.

Mr Rees-Jones, 29, (above) a bodyguard employed by the al-Fayed family, suffered severe facial and lung injuries and less serious head injuries in the accident two weeks ago. French investigators have been waiting anxiously to question him on the sequence of events leading to the crash, which also killed his employer, Dodi Fayed, and the driver, Henri Paul.

A statement yesterday by the doctor treating him said that his condition was "much

improved". He had been removed from a ventilator, was "perfectly conscious" and could communicate.

It remains unclear whether Mr Rees-Jones has yet regained his speech. His jaw and tongue were badly damaged in the accident but earlier reports that his tongue was severed have been denied. The former paratrooper underwent extensive surgery to rebuild his face on 4 September.

Sources in the investigation told the French press this week that they did not expect to interview Mr Rees-Jones for several weeks. The sources said that, until then, they would ask his family to limit discussion of

the accident with him to preserve his own recollections as clearly as possible.

The funeral of the driver of the car, Henri Paul, 41, will take place near Lorient in Brittany on Saturday. His family had wanted to cremate his remains but they have been ordered to bury him, for the time being, in case further tests are needed.

• The BBC's coverage of the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, was preferred by viewers over that of ITV according to figures released yesterday. The BBC received 19.29m viewers for its programme compared with ITV's 11.71m.

— John Lichfield, Paris

Yeltsin's wife takes on new role as TV boss

Naina Yeltsin has always stuck closely to the stereotypical role that best suits her husband's political interests. Most Russians know her only as a twinkling-eyed grandmother who bakes cakes and cuddles babies. But now she has a new job.

Mrs Yeltsin (right) is to co-chair the board of one of the Russian president's pet projects - a government television channel which will promote Russian culture in the face of an onslaught of low-brow television from the West.

Great tranches of air time that was formerly strictly controlled have fallen to soap operas, dubbed Hollywood movies, and talk shows. Now, however, under a presidential decree, Culture



TV is to replace St Petersburg's national network, Channel 5.

It has not escaped the notice of Mr Yeltsin's opponents that this means that the federal government has increased its control over Moscow-based national channels from two to three.

Mr Yeltsin has said he won't be running again. But his media firepower will still be very useful, when it comes to anointing the Kremlin's next occupant.

— Phil Reeves, Moscow

Policewoman in job fight

A rookie policewoman who found herself in trouble for wearing bright pink lipstick with her uniform admitted yesterday that she had found it difficult to obey orders.

But American-born Tamara Berton, 50 - who is claiming racial discrimination and unfair dismissal from the Metropolitan Police - said she eventually learnt to live with the discipline of being a police officer.

An industrial tribunal in Croydon was told that a report on her progress during her probationary period had concluded: "She appears at times to be a square peg in a round hole. Attempts to make her a round peg are seen as attacks. It is more like trying to interview a suspect."

The hearing continues today.

UPDATE

SOCIETY

Old people made homeless by fear

Domestic violence is a key cause of growing homelessness among the elderly, according to new research.

Nearly two-thirds of old people living on the streets or in night shelters have been ejected from their homes as a result of marital disputes or family breakdown, and a third have been unable to keep up payments on their home after losing their job or retiring, a report published by the Policy Press says. The report, *Older people and homelessness, a story of greed, violence, conflict and ruin*, by Derek Hawes, lecturer in housing at the University of Bristol, says that official figures fail to reflect the extent of the problem. "I was astounded by the number of cases in which violence drives people out of their homes. Granny bashing and fights between partners appears to be rife."

— Jeremy Laurence, Health Editor

PSYCHOLOGY

Personality 'reflected in car colour'

Choice of car colour says more about someone's personality than the clothes they wear or the house they live in, according to a survey yesterday.

Research carried out by the RAC found that owners of pastel-colour cars were eight times more likely to suffer from depression than people with bright coloured cars, while drivers of white cars were distant and aloof.

The survey found owners of silver or metallic blue cars were the happiest drivers on the road, while owners of cars in the newer pastel colours of lilac and lime were twice as likely to be the victims of road rage. On average they were ill three more days per year than other motorists.

Psychologist Conrad King said: "Drivers may think that they are cocooned when they are behind the wheel of their car but in reality their choice of car colour sends a clear signal to other motorists. A poor choice in car colour for pastel car owners mimics a number of other poor life choices which, in turn can lead to more stress and depression. The colour of the car can be a symptom of an underlying personality problem... Colour preferences can indicate a definite psycho-social pecking order on the roads, with the owners of black and red cars struggling for dominant position."

HEALTH

Scots urged to switch lifestyle

Scots need to improve their diet, cut out cigarette smoking and take more exercise if the nation is to ditch its reputation - crudely caricatured by the television character Rab C Nesbitt (right) - as one of the unhealthiest in Europe, a report said yesterday.

Heart disease and cancer remain the country's major killers, each accounting for a quarter of all deaths, according to the annual report of chief medical officer for Scotland Sir David Carter. At a press conference in Edinburgh, Sir David hinted strongly that the Government has resolved to tackle head-on the deprivation which results in the less affluent bearing a greater burden of physical and mental disease.

A Green Paper on public health is to be published later this year, and Sir David said one of the options being considered by Scottish Office civil servants was for it to concentrate on heart disease and cancer and how all public authorities could work together to alleviate the problem.

Sir David said: "The main message I have is - yes, some grounds for encouragement but no cause for complacency. It's difficult and unrealistic to see health in isolation. It has to be seen in the context of the life of the Scottish people and the environment in which they live. I do think I see major opportunities for the public to improve their own situation."



EMPLOYMENT

Jobless join skills revolution

The Government's belief that higher skills mean lower unemployment is called into question today by the London School of Economics.

Writing in the *Employment Policy Institute's Employment Audit* journal, Peter Robinson of LSE's Centre for Economic Performance shows how people on the dole have become better qualified over the last 20 years. In 1979, some 59 per cent of the unemployed in Britain had no qualifications, while by 1996 that figure had dropped by more than half to around 29 per cent. In the same issue however it is reported that there is a strong link between high educational attainment and high levels of pay.

— Barrie Clement, Labour Editor

ZITS

by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

7.30 FOR 8

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Sunbathing is twice as dangerous as we thought

Sunbathing may cause more than twice as many life-threatening cancers as previously suspected, scientists disclosed yesterday.

Our propensity to toast ourselves on the beach could be linked with the 40 per cent rise in the blood cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, as well as the increase in skin cancer.

Jeremy Lawrence, Health Editor, reports.

At the present rate of increase, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma is set to become the third or fourth most common cancer by 2010. An atlas displaying the geographical distribution of leukaemias and other blood cancers, published yesterday, shows that cases have risen 40 per cent in the last decade.

The cause of the rise has baffled scientists but it has paralleled the increase in melanoma. There are 4,000 new cases of melanoma a year and 5,000 new cases of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Both diseases are common in the sunnier counties of Cornwall, Devon and Somerset than in the north. The same pattern is seen in Europe, America and Australia.

Increasing affluence and the trend to take holidays in the sun are believed to be behind the rise in both cancers. The effects of global warming and thinning of the ozone layer are expected to increase the incidence of



Sunny side up: Blood and skin cancers are more common in warmer counties such as Devon, Cornwall and Somerset than in the North

Photograph: Alex Lenczai

failure when it ceases to produce new blood cells. Treatment is by radiotherapy and chemotherapy and 70 per cent of patients survive five years.

The atlas and handbook giving guidance on the investigation of leukaemia "clusters", published by the Leukaemia Research Fund, provide the most comprehensive picture of all that is known about one of the most feared cancers. It focuses on two areas, the North and the South-west, and is based on 27,000 cases of the diseases from 1984-93.

Leukaemia is perceived to be a disease of childhood because one type, acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, peaks in the under-20s and there are fears that it may be linked with exposure to radiation from nuclear power stations or overhead electricity cables. In fact, there is little evidence of either link and leukaemia affects ten times more adults than children.

Dr David Grant, scientific director of the fund, said the failure to pinpoint the causes of leukaemia was "one of the most distressing unanswered questions" for patients and their families which the atlas would help tackle. The answer was likely to be a combination of genetic, environmental, lifestyle and occupational factors. "The pattern of the diseases over the country, the differences between the sexes - blood cancers are more common in men, especially after age 50 - and between age groups, could provide clues to their causes," he said.

In some blood cancers, such as Hodgkin's disease, there was likely to be an infectious cause.

cancers caused by sunlight by 10 per cent over the next 50 years.

Professor Ray Cartwright, director of the Leukaemia Research Fund centre for clinical epidemiology at Leeds University, said: "Increasing expo-

sure to sunlight is my favourite hypothesis for the rise in non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. People who get skin cancer also get more lymphomas. Farmers who are out in the sun more get more of both diseases. Darker

skinned people are protected against them."

"We know from work on sunbeds that exposure to them takes away some of the immune properties of the white blood cells. It is still a hypothesis but

if it is true it means there are simple public health measures we can take, such as telling people to cover up in the sun."

Professor Cartwright said other explanations were increasing pollution from cars,

which would be much harder to control, and changing use of antibiotics over the past 50 years which may have affected people's immunity and changed the nature of the infections to which they are exposed.

The first sign of lymphoma, which is a cancer of the lymph glands, is a lump in the neck, armpit or groin. At a later stage the cancer affects the liver, spleen and bone marrow and ultimately causes bone marrow

Fleapits fight to survive in new age of the cinema



Flashback to the Forties: Children at a Saturday morning matinee in a town-centre cinema

The number of multiplex cinemas has surged from two in 1985 to 79, apparently heralding the death of traditional town-centre cinema. But industry experts say there is still a strong demand for the local - as long as it moves away from its 'fleapit' image.

Jojo Mayes reports.

Anyone over the age of 25 can remember a time their local "fleapit" - complete with strop-py ushers, stale popcorn and all-important back row - formed the focus of a Saturday night out.

The news that ABC, one of the town-centre cinema's greatest defenders, was selling more

than 20 locals appeared to sound a death-knell for a Great British institution.

The company blamed its decision on local councils for allowing large, out-of-town cinemas to be built - but admitted that proceeds from the sale would be reinvested in its own multiplex developments.

The rise of the multiplex, defined as a new cinema with five or more screens, now seems almost unstoppable. Since its arrival in 1985, massive investment from organisations such as Warner Village, Virgin, UCI and the Australian entertainment giant Village Roadshow has swollen its numbers from 2 to 79 (with 705 screens).

Now industry analysts expect record growth for 1997, with a further 30 multiplex openings, accounting for 293 new screens.

Sheffield, if all planned development goes ahead, will

boast 79 cinema screens at just five sites - one screen for every 7,000 inhabitants.

The rise is linked to a surge in cinema audiences, after a long period of decline. Latest figures from the British Film Institute show a 1995 figure of 114 million admissions from 54 million in 1984 (although still a long way from the 1945 figure of 1,595 million).

According to John Wilkinson, chief executive of the Cinemas Exhibitors' Association, the popularity of multiplexes can be explained by a number of factors.

"There are problems at some traditional sites: public transport is so bad and people like to use their car; and, there is a general movement of people away from town centres... some people even stopped going to the 'local fleapit' because it wasn't as warm as being at

| UK SITES AND SCREENS | | |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Year | Total sites | Total screens |
| 1984 | 660 | 1,271 |
| 1985 | 663 | 1,251 |
| 1986 | 660 | 1,249 |
| 1987 | 648 | 1,215 |
| 1988 | 699 | 1,416 |
| 1989 | 719 | 1,559 |
| 1990 | 737 | 1,685 |
| 1991 | 724 | 1,789 |
| 1992 | 735 | 1,845 |
| 1993 | 723 | 1,890 |
| 1994 | 734 | 1,969 |
| 1995 | 743 | 2,019 |

Source: Screen Finance

younger cinema-goers find some multiplexes soulless and clinical places and actually prefer the town centre.

Mr Wilkinson stressed yesterday that there was plenty of room for the local town centre cinema to flourish - as long as it learnt to adapt to customers' requirements.

He pointed to small independents which had flourished by providing the kind of comfort and entertainment that the customer wants. "It's about responding to local demand... There's definitely room for both."

One such example is the Screen group of six independent, town-centre cinemas. It recently opened the Screen At Winchester in a Grade II listed chapel, and plans to continue its "slow and careful" expansion of one and two screen cinemas.

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British climber dies on Mont Blanc

A British climber has died in an avalanche on the treacherous mountain Mont Blanc, French police disclosed yesterday. Alister Crookes, 39, of Castle Bytham, Lincolnshire, was one of a five-person British team attempting an ascent of the so-called "cursed mountain" on Monday morning.

Three of his companions were slightly injured and were treated at nearby Chamoni hospital after being airlifted from the mountain by helicopter, while the fifth climber escaped unhurt, said a spokesman for Chamoni mountain police.

Mr Crookes is at least the third British climber to die on Mont Blanc this summer. Mr Crookes's party came to grief at a height of about 10,500 feet on the Grand Mallet route up the 15,600 feet peak.

Couple's agony

The father of two children with a rare and fatal genetic disorder spoke last night of the "agonising" decision he and his wife have made not to let them suffer more treatment.

Rhys Daniels, six, was the first child in the world to have two bone marrow transplants in a bid to cure the Batten's Disease. His nine-year-old sister Charly also suffers from the metabolic disorder which causes blindness, dementia and immobility, and kills most children by the age of 10. Rhys is confined to a wheelchair and is totally blind. His sister can no longer communicate and is unaware of her surroundings.

Yesterday their father Barry, 39, told how he and his wife Carmen decided to let their children die in peace at home in Epping, Essex. He said: "We have decided that when Rhys and Charly next fall ill or get an infection we don't want them being rushed to hospital and having needles and tubes stuck in them. We want them here at home where we can look after them up to our love and let them die peacefully."

Farmer defeated

Ramblers were celebrating yesterday after a farmer who blocked rights of way with electric fencing and a manure heap was given a £4,000 court bill.

John Gooderham, 56, was fined £500 and ordered to pay £3,500 costs after being found guilty of two charges of obstructing rights of way on his farm near Stowmarket, Suffolk. Magistrates at Bury St Edmunds decided he had "flagrantly disregarded the rights of countryside users".

The Ramblers Association hailed the ruling as "significant".



Principal players: Tony Blair and his wife, Cherie, being greeted by well-wishers in Wrexham, North Wales, yesterday

Photograph: Dave Kendall/PA

Blair confident of a yes in Wales

Tony Blair made his third visit to Wales during the referendum campaign, saying he was confident the Principality will vote Yes tomorrow. The Prime Minister was in Wrexham and Deeside, seeking to bolster the Yes vote in a part of the Principality usually regarded as more 'devotee' than South Wales. Tony Heath reports.

If the voters show a fraction of the enthusiasm which greeted the Blairs in North Wales yesterday, then the year 2000 will see an elected body take office in Cardiff.

Mr Blair greeted with applause and cheers as he passed through crowds in Wrexham's shopping centre. Scores of "Vote Yes" posters were held aloft. "We love you Tony," was the message painted on a piece of cardboard by nine-year-old Dee Williams.

Her mother, Veronica, said proudly: "Everyone round here is for an assembly - and Mr Blair of course."

The Prime Minister started his walkabout in Hope Street - and hopes are on the rise as a result of his visit.

Steve Reeves, an electrician, has just turned 18 and is eligible to vote for the first time. "It's going to be a vote for an as-

sembly and a vote for Wales. We are big enough to take responsibility for things that affect us here," he declared.

Gareth Thomas, one of a clutch of MPs on parade, ousted the junior Welsh Office minister Rod Richards in Clwyd West on 1 May. A hardened campaigner, Mr Thomas commented: "It's a very tough fight in North Wales, where there's a tendency to look to England just 10 miles down the road."

Liberal Democrat peer Lord Thomas of Gresford was born and raised in Wrexham. As the prime ministerial convoy gathered he said: "I can't imagine any other prime minister receiving the sort of reception Mr Blair is

getting." The Welsh Secretary, Ron Davies, who buzzes round Wales with undiminished energy, looked pleased.

"As the campaign intensifies it is clear that the case for a 'Yes' vote is getting through but there's still a lot to do and there can be no complacency."

Earlier the party toured the Toyota engine factory on Deeside and took a tea-break with shop-floor staff.

The factory celebrated its fifth birthday this month and is something of a model of the new Wales, where hi-tech industries and sleek production lines are on a roll.

In the five years it has produced 360,000 engines to power

cars made at Burnaston, in Derbyshire, and in Turkey. Such developments are seen as a promise of the glowing future for a devolved Wales.

Mr Blair's visit came as polls showed the Welsh likely to vote "Yes" - but with a significant number still to decide which way to jump.

A poll for HTV puts support for an assembly at 37 per cent, with 29 per cent against and 34 per cent undecided.

That is something of a turnaround from the 1979 St David's Day referendum, when devolution was rejected by 4-1. Even so, the cliché "Everything to play for" hangs tantalisingly in the Welsh air.

Athletes fail 75% more drugs tests

More British athletes than ever are failing steroid drug tests, the Sports Council of the United Kingdom said yesterday. It said there had been a 75 per cent increase in the number of failed tests for muscle-building anabolic drugs.

Michele Verroken, director of ethics and anti-doping at the Sports Council, told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme that the number of steroid cases had increased over the last year from 15 to 27 cases of anabolic steroids, although the total number of drug findings had remained steady.

She said the findings showed that some people appeared to be misusing drugs even on the day of a competition. If athletes felt they could take the drugs because of an insufficient testing programme, sport must look carefully at deterrents, she said.

"If we are reducing penalties, as appears to be the trend, then the sports federations may have to ask their athletes what really will stop this misuse among the few."

She said athletes appeared to want those who misused drugs to be thrown out of sport.

The Sports Council wanted to ask the sports governing bodies about the problem.

"It's going to be a difficult matter for some of them because they feel under great pressure from abroad, where we have seen, certainly in Germany, civil legislation restricting the length of bans. But in this country we have seen the greatest commitment for drug-free sport, so why not?"

Ms Verroken said that when all Britain's Olympic athletes were tested before the Atlanta Games last year, the results were 100 per cent negative.

Burma arrest

A young Briton was arrested in Burma after handcuffing himself to the gates of a high school in the capital Rangoon, and shouting democracy slogans.

James Mawdsley, 24, was cut free by police and taken in for questioning and troops were then brought in as he handed out leaflets, shouted slogans and sprayed-painted the Burmese word for "love and kindness" on the school wall.

His one-man protest took place on the eve of the anniversary of the current military regime taking power on 18 September 1988 and crushing a pro-democracy uprising.

Although the demonstration caused little commotion as uniformed and plainclothes policemen kept passersby on the other side of the street, it was unprecedented in Burma, where the authorities keep a tight lid on dissent. The Foreign Office was holding urgent talks with the Burmese authorities last night.

Little public dissent has been seen in the streets of Rangoon since last December, when thousands of students demanding greater civil liberties took to the streets. University classes have been suspended since then. Aung San Suu Kyi, winner of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize, has not spoken in public since a government-controlled mob attacked her car last November and is largely confined to her house.

Burma has been ruled by the military since 1962.

Kate Watson-Smyth

Rail companies fined £250,000 for failing to answer 750,000 telephone calls in a month

Train companies are to be fined £250,000 for failing to answer 15 per cent of calls from passengers in four weeks using the telephone inquiry service, the rail regulator said yesterday.

As revealed exclusively in *The Independent*, nearly 750,000 calls went unanswered in the month under scrutiny by John Swift, the rail

regulator. This low level of response immediately triggered the penalty payments.

Mr Swift instigated the investigation after the service failed to answer 90 per cent of calls to the National Rail Inquiry Service.

Ivor Warburton, the chairman of the Association of Train Operating Companies, which runs the

service, blamed heavier-than-expected demand before the August bank holiday, and said the target had been met, but one week late.

"We are one week late achieving the target we set out in March this year, to answer 90 per cent of all calls, to answer them faster, and to have a new information system,"

He said the service cost £3mil every four weeks. The number of staff answering the calls had increased from about 1,100 to 1,700.

Mr Swift said found it "deeply disturbing" that people were getting inaccurate information to the extent it was being reported. He added that he would be taking that issue up with the rail operators. The fines would be issued automatically once British

Telecom, which had been monitoring the calls' success rate, had confirmed the performance in the fourth week.

Mr Swift said that callers who were not answered, or who encountered the engaged tone, counted as failed calls. He said the operators had promised to reach

a 90 per cent target early this year. "They said they would be there in June, then July, then in August. In the end I said, 'Enough is enough and we have to issue the final order'. When I hear Mr Warburton say that they are only one week late, I cannot agree with him."

Randeep Ramesh

Government to advertise for UK's human rights judge in Europe

The Government is to break with time-honoured tradition by advertising for candidates to fill a senior judicial position, as the UK's judge on the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Adverts will appear in a national broadsheet and the legal

press this week in a bid to widen the field of possible contenders for the post in the new, full-time, single human rights court, which will replace the part-time European Commission for Human Rights and European Court of Human Rights next year.

It is the first time that any senior judge has been sought through the situations vacant columns. The Foreign Office said the move was in line with the Government's policy of "encouraging openness in government business".

Any form of advertising for

high judicial office is a major departure from the current ultra-secretive method of recruitment, "soundings" by the Lord Chancellor among existing judges and senior lawyers.

But the reforms of the Strasbourg machinery mean that

while the judicial post will become full-time and more prestigious, the holder must be prepared to make Strasbourg his or her principal place of residence.

The Foreign Office must come up with a shortlist of three candidates

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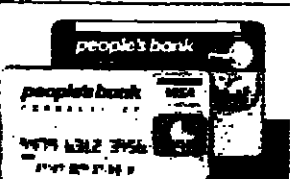
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Schools



You don't

Parents who have seen their children learning suffer in the classroom which affects children's learning today condemned the Government's authority for preventing progress.

Theresa Brice, whose 11-year-old daughter Barbary Primary School in Hove, east London borough of Havering, is being today served and who has seen the Government's mediation of the crisis.

She felt back of resources, but she felt back of resources. She said: "The situation is a mess, a complete mess. We are quite helpless. We don't know what to do. We don't know what to do."

Defusing the

Ministers are to spend £23m tackling the problem of truancy as part of the Government's campaign against social exclusion. Research has suggested that society as a whole would benefit from a reduction in truancy because of a link between school failure and crime.

John Reid reports on the new proposals.

The alienation of thousands of young people from education is a ticking time bomb. David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, said yesterday Mr Blunkett told a London

More parents appear

A dramatic rise in the number of young people from schools who are being referred to the courts has prompted local government to call on ministers to take action.

The English local government's annual report, published yesterday, said:

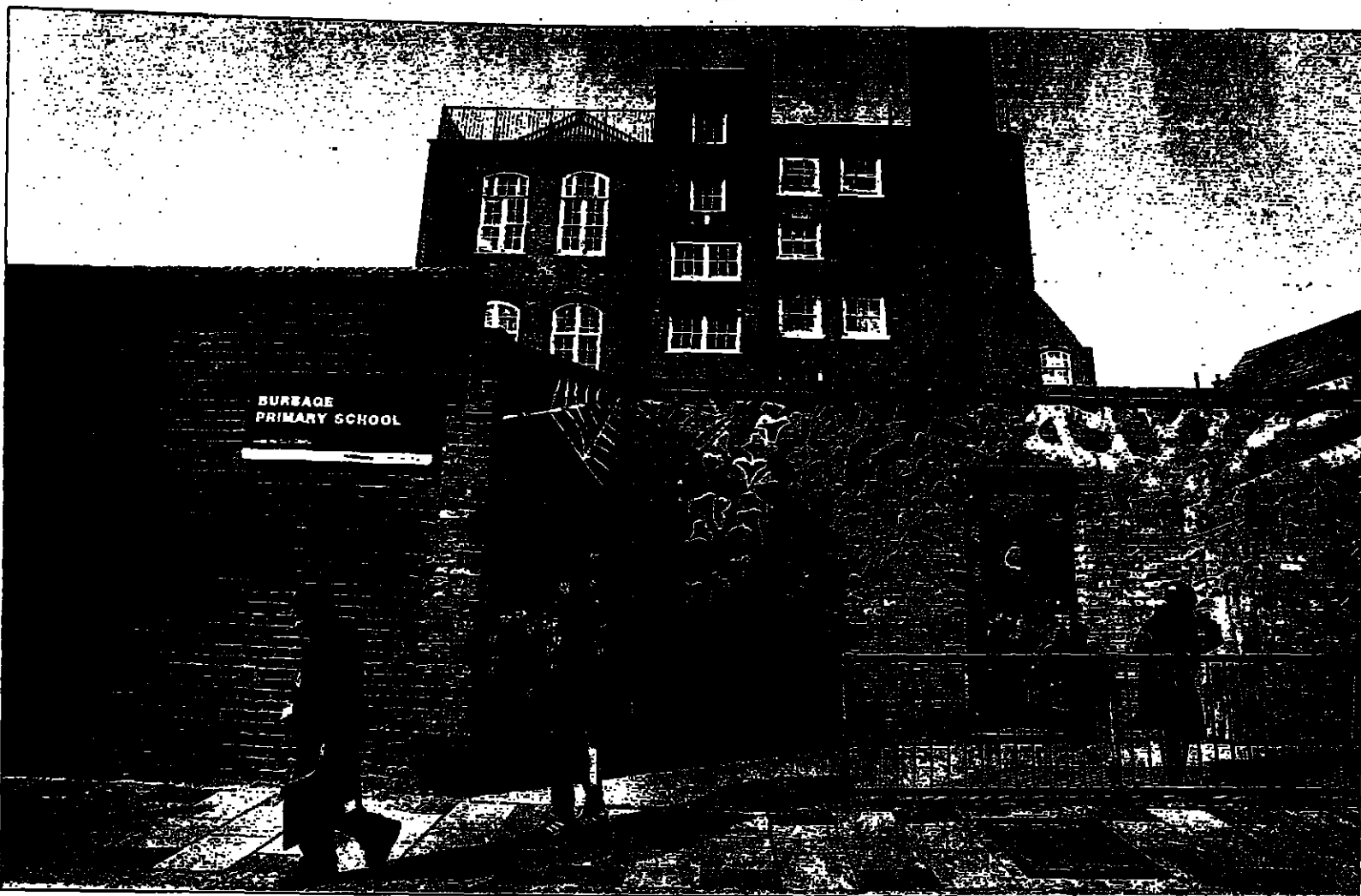
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Schools hit squad prepares to move on Hackney



Bursage Primary School in Hoxton where parents are unhappy with the education their children are receiving

Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

An inspectors' report on Hackney local education authority in London to be published tomorrow will be highly critical.

Ministers will take powers to take over failing education authorities in this autumn's Education Bill but they do not have them yet. What can they do? Judith Judd and Lucy Ward examine the options.

A team of three or four experts appointed by the Government is expected to be drafted into Hackney to sort out the struggling north-east London authority.

Ministers were last night still wrestling with details of what powers the team, which would include officers from other local authorities, would have. They are hoping a chief education officer, present or retired, might head the group.

The Government wants to portray the team as a hit squad to prove it is showing "zero tolerance" of educational failure. It acknowledges, however, that any intervention would need to be accepted by Hackney.

The main precedent is that of Calderdale, the West Yorkshire authority responsible for the Ridings School, which was criticised in an inspection report last March. The then education minister, Gillian Shephard, announced plans to draft in a team of education experts, but no outside consultants were ever sent in and the Government has just given the authority the all-clear to put its recovery plan into action unaided.

Hackney, however, is in greater difficulties than Calderdale, with a number of senior officer posts unfilled. The authority has no permanent director in charge of schools, but plans to advertise the post later this month and appoint a consultant in the meantime.

Stephen Byers, the school standards minister, sent inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education into Hackney in June. He said that the borough was suffering from "lack of direction and drift". The only statutory powers which would enable the Government to take control of Hackney and remove powers from elected politicians relate to local authorities as a whole. These would enable a board of commissioners to start running the whole council, not just the education service.

Experts doubt whether a re-

port on schools, however damning, would provide sufficient grounds for sending in commissioners. One said yesterday: "It is a procedure which would normally only be used if everyone's hand was found to be in the till."

If Hackney proves resistant to ministers' proposals, David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, will threaten a legal takeover once the Government has the necessary power, possibly as early as next spring.

Sources at the Department for Education and Employment said no final decision had been taken on a government response to the report but acknowledged: "We are not at this stage looking at taking over the schools."

The authority yesterday insisted it had seen only a draft of the Ofsted report.

The initial inspection phase centred on the authority itself. Inspectors were scheduled to visit schools during a second phase.

Graham Lane, education chair of the Local Government Association which represents councils said: "We can't stand idly by and see an education authority that to all intents and purposes does not exist. You might argue that some authorities are ineffective but this one is not even operating."

'You don't know where to turn'

Parents who have seen their children's learning suffer in the climate of disarray which affects schooling in Hackney yesterday condemned the local education authority for presiding over "a complete mess".

Theresa Bruce, who has two children at Bursage Primary School in Hoxton in the east London borough, felt that they were being badly served and welcomed any measures the Government might take to resolve the crisis.

She felt lack of resources was partly to blame, but lack of adequate management was seen as the main problem.

She said: "The situation at present is a mess. A complete mess. As parents we feel quite helpless. We don't want to have to send our kids to other schools and so any-

thing that can be done to improve things would be welcomed by everybody. All us parents care about is making sure our kids get a good education."

Like many of the children at the school, her seven-year-old son Mark has special needs which she feels are not being adequately catered for at present.

She said: "Mark has special difficulty in learning and could really benefit from more one-to-one help, but the authority is just too starved of resources and the teachers do not have enough training to deal with him."

"A high percentage of the children at the school have some kind of special needs problem, whether it is difficulty in learning to read and write or an emotional problem. The authority should be able to cater

for them but not enough of the teachers have any training in social welfare.

"Schools do not even have enough staff to supervise the children's lunches and have to ask parents to come in and help."

Ms Bruce also claimed that there were problems with bullying, but said that when parents called on schools or the education authority to help, their pleas were largely ignored.

She said: "Sometimes you just don't know where to turn. A lot of the time parents turn to each other for the support they should be getting from the school. More should be done to involve parents and to keep them up-to-date with what is going on. All we ask is that our children's education is taken as seriously as they deserve."

Amanda Kelly

Defusing the truancy time-bomb

Ministers are to spend £23m tackling the problem of truancy as part of the Government's campaign against social exclusion. Research has suggested that society as a whole would benefit from a reduction in truancy because of a link between school failure and crime.

Judith Judd reports on the new proposals.

The alienation of thousands of young people from education is "a ticking time bomb", David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, said yesterday.

Mr Blunkett told a London

conference that the Government was inviting bids for projects ranging from better school attendance registration to more work experience for 14-year-olds.

A recent Audit Commission report showed that 65 per cent of school-age offenders sentenced in court had also been excluded from school or were persistent truants.

Nearly 1 million pupils have missed at least one half-day school session without permission or a note from their parents.

Mr Blunkett said at the conference, organised by the National Union of Teachers and the Times Educational Supplement that the Government was offering £21m to:

- help local authorities and schools tackle truancy;
- reduce exclusions from

school and improve provision for excluded pupils;

- bring disaffected 14- to 16-year-olds back to learning.

A further £2m will be available to give pupils more work experience.

Examples might include better ways of monitoring school attendance, more opportunity to spend time in local firms and colleges, and a chance for pupils at risk of exclusion to spend part of the week in a pupil referral unit.

Exclusions have risen sharply over the last three years and around 13,000 pupils are believed to have been permanently excluded from school last year.

There are now 3,859 pupils in pupil referral units, up from 2,107 in 1995.

Mr Blunkett said: "I believe education lies at the heart of our

programme to combat social exclusion.

"Truancy from school affects not only pupils' chances of future success but also has an impact on the wider community, as does exclusion."

"Disaffection from school costs us dear. It costs the community in terms of the disruption which young people on the streets can create and there is a cost in terms of blighted prospects for the individual pupil who may fail to pick up any qualifications," he added.

"The cost to the taxpayer of dealing with the consequences of failure is enormous compared to the cost of investment in preventing exclusion and truancy."

The Government will issue new guidance to all schools on attendance, how to combat truancy and emphasising parents' responsibility.

More parents appeal against school choice decisions

A dramatic rise in the number of parents lodging complaints over the handling of schools admissions appeals has prompted local government watchdogs to call on ministers to review the appeals system.

The English local government ombudsmen's annual report, published to-

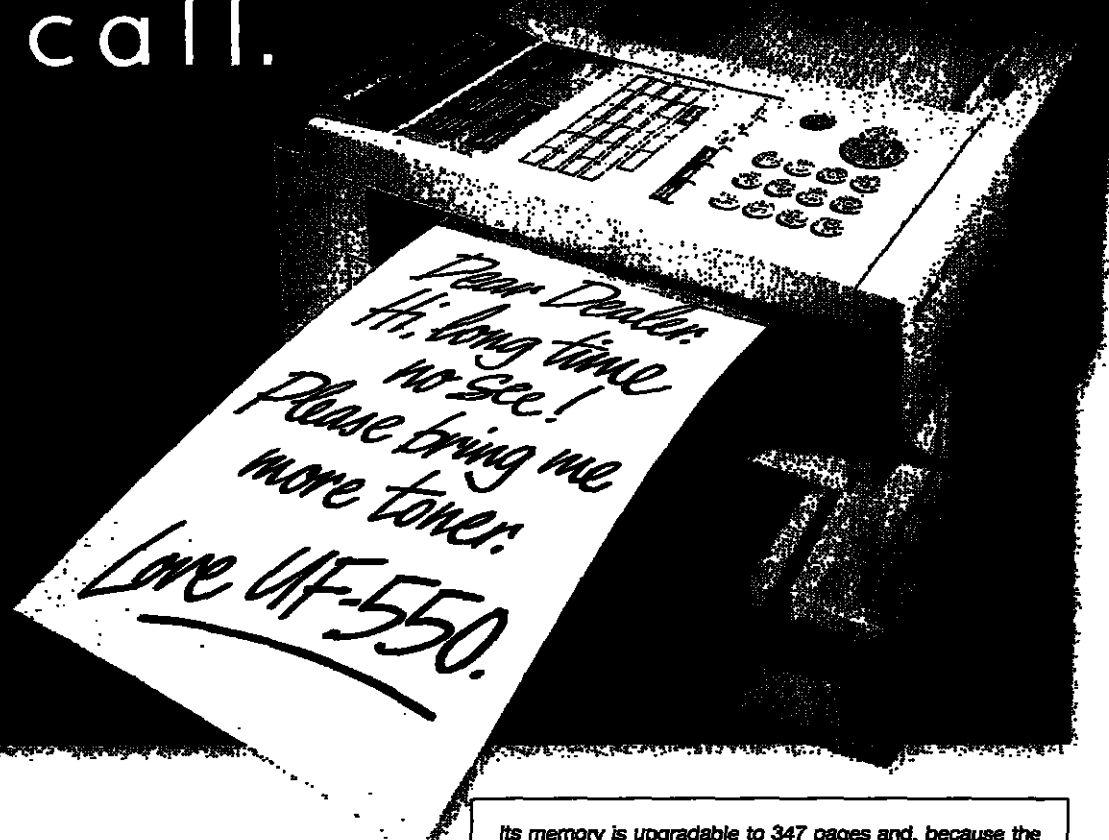
day, reveals a 50 per cent increase in complaints by parents in the North of England dissatisfied with the way their appeal had been dealt with.

Appeals committees often did not understand the two-stage procedure open to parents appealing against the refusal of a place at the school of their choice.

the three ombudsmen in England revealed.

Appeals committees considering whether to overturn a school's decision to refuse a child a place must decide whether admitting the child would prejudice the education of other pupils by stretching resources unacceptably.

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Some will remember the first months ago when the first wave of the flu pandemic seemed to be emerging. Many of us were clinging on to the idea of being able to ride out the pandemic side-effects up to and including through pulmonary complications.

There was, for example, a report in a recent issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that a healthy 29-year-old Mexican woman developed hypoxemia, starting a course of antibiotics. Two months ago, she died.

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8/PAY PRESSURES

PM forgoes his own rise to assuage public sector

Tony Blair yesterday announced that he would forgo a increase of £41,443 in his salary. *Colin Brown, Political Correspondent, reports on the Prime Minister's attempts to defuse a growing row over the continuing squeeze on the pay of 1.3m public-sector workers.*

The Government faced an angry backlash from nurses, doctors and teachers yesterday as the Prime Minister took the lead in urging public sector pay restraint by forgoing an increase in his own salary.

In a U-turn, Downing Street announced that the Prime Minister would limit his own rise to

around the Government's inflation target of 2.5 per cent as a signal to the country to maintain the squeeze on pay.

Some Cabinet ministers were last night considering following Mr Blair's lead by not accepting their entitlement to a salary increase of £16,000. If that happens, it is probable the rest of the Cabinet will fall into line. One minister said the position as it stood was "untenable".

The squeeze on pay was reinforced by Alastair Darling, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, who wrote to the Independent pay review bodies covering 1.3 million public-sector workers calling for "low" pay recommendations. His note said: "Pay costs will need to be contained within existing spending plans. There will be no access to the reserve to fund spending on pay in excess of those plans."

The Treasury's freeze means

that any increases will have to be funded from efficiency savings, or by cuts in other services.

John Monks, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, called for a meeting with Mr Darling and said: "It is clear there cannot be a permanent freeze in the public-sector pay bill without the quality of public services being affected."

The calls for pay restraint were brushed aside by the British Medical Association, which tabled a demand for an increase of 10 per cent for GPs as part of a five-year programme of increases to catch up with comparable groups, such as lawyers and accountants.

Nurses last week put in a demand for an inflation-busting pay rise. Rodney Bickerstaffe, general secretary of Unison, said his union had no problem with the Prime Minister or Cabinet ministers receiving in-

creases recommended by an independent pay-review body. "We do expect, however, the same treatment for public-sector workers."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, condemned the pay freeze facing public-service workers. "We can't go on like this year after year after year... I'm warning them that at some stage there will finally be an outburst of anger and that is of course something that nobody wants," he said on BBC radio.

William Hague, the Conservative leader, accused the Government of "hypocrisy" after Mr Blair urged the Cabinet to take the extra £16,000 raising their pay to £103,860. Mr Hague will follow Mr Blair in taking an inflation-linked rise as Leader of the Opposition.



Pay prescription: Doctors are pushing for a series of increases over five years, to catch up with other professions

National picture masks increases for big earners

A wide range of people with special qualifications and even workers without skills in areas of high employment are currently enjoying the benefits of soaring wage inflation, *Barrie Clement, Labour Editor, reports on a trend which official data has failed to pick up.*

National figures showing pay settlements gently nudging upwards tell only part of the truth. Reports that wage increases are hovering around the relatively modest 3 to 4 per cent mask serve to draw attention away from the double-digit rises increasingly awarded to a wide range of employees.

Even the more sophisticated data from the Government on average earnings – currently showing an uptick of 4.25 per cent – fails to detect the hidden wage inflation which has attended the end of the recession and the growing disparity between the "winners" and "losers".

Most official figures monitor the remuneration of employees, but a burgeoning labour force of freelance, "portfolio" and subcontracted workers means that the data is of increasingly limited use. The Government could well be faced with a far stronger surge in pay than has so far been detected.

Broad analysis of wage deals shows pay edging up slightly ahead of the 3.3 per cent inflation rate, but certain professions and a broad sweep of people with supervisory skills are enjoying something of a boom.

Information technology specialists in the big cities are commonly receiving rises of 10 per cent in order to prevent them leaving. To attract new computer staff, salaries at organisations are often up by 15 per cent.

Salary increases for those who are simply computer literate are running between 5-10 per cent nationally. For freelance analysts and programmers with the special skills needed to enable computers to cope with the millennium, firms in the City are now paying some £60,000 a year – up 20 per cent on last year, according to Nick Robson of recruiters Harvey Nash.

Building site managers are also benefiting from the upturn in construction and have been the beneficiaries of 10 per cent rises or more. Bricklayers in London have seen hourly rates move up from £6.50 to £9.50.

The hidden increases have been detected by a section of the Bank of England, which prepares business intelligence for the bank's senior decision-makers. In an unreported section of its latest "summary of business conditions" the bank's officials reveal strong undercurrents of wage inflation.

The bank has spotted surges in the pay of graduate financial services staff, with some individuals hopping from job to job

in the city for 30 to 35 per cent increases.

Lawyers with expertise in commercial disciplines are also one of the beneficiaries with rises of 20 per cent common. Gareth Quarry, chief executive of Quarry Douglas, specialist recruitment agency, pointed out that far fewer young people trained in commercial law during the recession and consequently there is now a scarcity.

Demand has been exacerbated by the arrival of American firms who are paying up to £65,000 a year for newly qualified entrants compared with around £30,000 on offer from domestic partnerships.

Legal recruitment specialists Taylor Root reports that while in 1996, 18 per cent of legal departments increased in size during the previous year, this year 29 per cent of companies have taken on more lawyers.

In the service sector – especially in the leisure and hotel industry – management has been forced to award interim pay increases to ensure salary levels are keeping pace with those offered by rivals.

There are considerable regional variations. In areas of high unemployment in the Wales, Scotland and the North-east, companies are still inundated with applications for all jobs. Here rates are staying at the low levels to which they descended during the recession.

In Cambridge and Crawley in southern England, where unemployment is negligible, even unskilled clerical workers have seen salaries increase by 10 per cent. Where companies establish "call centres" – essentially white-collar factories which deal with customers over the telephone – pay rates for clerical staff are driven up.

Alastair Hatchett of Incomes Data Services, argues that wage inflation could continue to spiral in some occupations as the economy overheats and shortages worsen. Pay increases are also being pushed up by higher inflation, four successive rises in mortgage rates and the strict fiscal measures taken in the Budget. Ironically the kind of flexible labour favoured by the Government could undermine its strict policy on inflation. It is more difficult for the Treasury to keep a handle on pay in a system where the old certainties of annual wage increases are supplanted by performance-related pay and remuneration dictated by labour's supply and demand.

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A new project to help single mothers into work is showing sensational early results. The scheme could become the model for a 'New Welfare', giving the underclass an escape from a life on benefits, says Harriet Harman, Secretary of State for Social Security, in an exclusive interview with Anthony Bevan, *Politics Editor*

Official advisers have been on the freedom to cut costs and red tape as part of a government determination to "what works" in getting parents into jobs. In a series of interviews and look at the child while a look at the

The culture of single mothers, their social and economic status, and the role of the Secretary of State for Social Security, Harriet Harman, in a series of interviews and look at the child while a look at the

Under the "New Deal" demonstration project, which started in July, 1996, mothers have been helped to find work after just one interview. With 1,000 mothers across the country, the project is a pilot scheme, without a permanent

Those who have helped into work will be given follow-up interviews

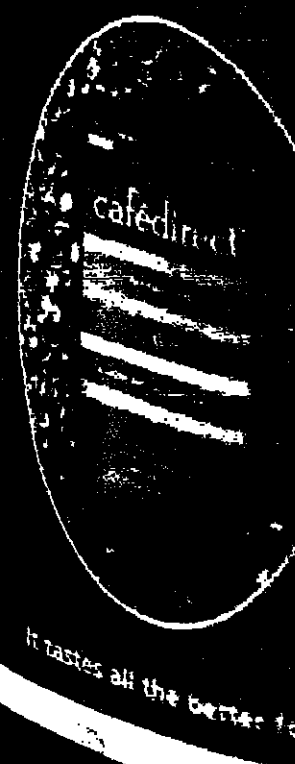
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| 27 | £8.75 | |
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Mandelson a

Co-ordinated policy is essential to successful government, Peter Mandelson, minister without portfolio, argued yesterday. *Chorion Magazine* Westminster Correspondent says his speech may become a benchmark for how the Blair administration uses Whitehall.

At the heart of Peter Mandelson's approach is the need to ensure that the British Government's policy and presentation are coherent and coordinated. Speaking to an audience



Harman spells out her mission: a hand-up, not a hand-out

A new project to help single mothers into work is showing sensational early results. The scheme could become the model for a 'New Welfare', giving the underclass an escape from a life on benefit, says Harriet Harman, Secretary of State for Social Security, in an exclusive interview with Anthony Bevis, Political Editor

Official advisers have been given the freedom to cut corners and red tape as part of the Government's determination to find "what works" in getting single parents into jobs. In one case, an adviser drove a woman to her interview and looked after her child while it took place.

The enthusiasm of single mothers, their social security advisers and Harriet Harman, the Secretary of State, is infectious. "Now I've got a life," one single mother said after she had been helped to escape a sentence of life on benefit.

Under the "New Deal" demonstration project, which started in July, 180 lone mothers have so far been helped into work after just one interview. With 1,000 mothers seen so far, the hit-rate is beyond all expectations; without precedent.

Those who have not been helped into work so far will be given follow-up interviews, help

and guidance, and with many of the women who find work getting more than £50 extra each week - on top of all their benefits - the incentives are real.

There are now 1 million single parents looking after 2 million children, at a cost to the state of £10bn a year in benefits, which means that the advantages of the new deal project are not only measured in terms cash in hand for one of the most deprived groups in society.

One official source estimated that eventual savings could exceed £100m a year in benefits for the lone mothers alone. But Ms Harman wants to apply the principles of success to people who are receiving disability benefit, too.

"These women are being liberated from the idea that they've got a government that is just dumping on them all the time; criticising them for 'jumping the housing queue'," Ms Harman told *The Independent* yesterday.

The pilot project, which started in July, covers eight areas in England, Scotland and Wales, with an estimated 40,000 single mothers with children of school age. The scheme is to move on to a national basis in October next year - with a target of helping all 500,000 single mothers with an estimated 1 million children of school age.

Ms Harman said: "This is what government is for - not about pointing the finger at people, but tackling poverty and social exclusion and tackling workless households and child

poverty. Right, then what's the programme that delivers that?"

The women and the advisers were so keen back in July, that people were jumping the gun; asking for interviews before they were invited, and giving interviews to women with children under five.

"I have told the advisers, 'Just do it. Don't worry about the red tape'," Ms Harman said. "If the regulations are in the way, I'll change them. If they hit any obstacles from other departments, I'll get it sorted out..."

"They hit the ground running and far from there being any resistance, with women saying, 'Leave me alone, get the jackboot of the state off my

neck', most people have been incredibly welcoming. Some have been slightly apprehensive to start with, but then they've been converted."

"They are ahead of us. Of those turning up for interview, 14 per cent are women with children under five. Nobody has written to them and invited them in, but they're turning up anyway, and once they come in they get the programme."

That means that they are taken through the labyrinth of benefits, the jobs on offer, the hours and terms, and given a computerised calculation of the net increase in income they will have at the end of the week.

"This lot," said Ms Harman, "when it comes to Christmas, they're going to have money for presents. They have moved from just coping to actually getting a life." Everyone benefits: mothers, children, the employer, the taxpayer - and the community at large.

"This is about real people, real lives," the minister said yesterday. "It is what government is for. It is very exciting, it's liberating people. This is part of the process of creating a new welfare state. And it works."



Harriet Harman: 'When it comes to Christmas they're going to have money for presents. They have moved from just coping to actually getting a life' Photograph: Tom Pilton

| HOW 'NEW WELFARE' HAS ALREADY HELPED | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------------|-------|-----------|-------------------|
| Age | Wage | Better-off by | Hours | Perm/temp | Type of job |
| 22 | £76.80 | £33.84 | 16 | Perm | Tele-sales |
| 31 | £12.03 | £40.74 | 24 | Perm | Junior technician |
| 25 | £102.35 | £35.94 | 39 | Perm | Child-care |
| 39 | £113.75 | £51.34 | 35 | Perm | Care assistant |
| 31 | £99.00 | £67.10 | 33 | Perm | Cleaner |
| 35 | £87.10 | £42.06 | 26 | Perm | Sales assistant |

Mandelson argues for strong centre

Co-ordinated policy is essential to successful government, Peter Mandelson, minister without portfolio, argued yesterday. *Christian Walmar, Westminster Correspondent*, says his speech may become a benchmark for how the Blair administration uses Whitehall.

At the heart of Peter Mandelson's approach is the notion of a strong central structure to ensure that the both the Government's policy and its presentation are coherent and co-ordinated.

Speaking to an audience of senior public-sector executives at a Birmingham University seminar in central London, Mr Mandelson, minister without portfolio, said: "The job of the centre of government is to make sure departments work together: failure of government machinery means failing the people who elected us."

He stressed that there should also be strong ministerial departments and saw no contradiction between "having a strong centre and devolved responsibility". Mr Mandelson's very role has been criticised by some ministers because of the control which he is thought to exert over departmental initiatives. Indeed, there was a strong warning to departments that they would not be allowed to launch initiatives which "affect other departments' resources

without ensuring the policy is well-thought out and properly co-ordinated."

Mr Mandelson said: "Departments must also pull together more to deliver the quality of government this country needs." All too often, he warned, "the results have been ineffectual - because rooted in the lowest common policy denominator - or incomplete, because bogged down in bureaucratic turf wars. We are not going to let that happen."

In what will be seen as a defence of his role in co-ordinating the presentation of the Government's policy, he argued that while "there are some who still denigrate the presentation of policy as a diversion from its substance", he took the opposite view. "It is a question of accountability - we have a duty to

explain." If a policy cannot be explained in a simple way, "it is more likely than not to contain fundamental flaws".

While under the Conservatives, Michael Heseltine, the deputy prime minister, had created a mechanism to co-ordinate the presentation of policy, it did not work because the policies themselves were wrong.

Mr Mandelson spoke of increased accountability. At least seven of the Bills in the current legislative programme would be published in draft form, to allow for comments which would improve them. There would, too, be an annual report outlining the Government's achievements and setting new targets. The forthcoming spending review would force departments to outline what they intend to spend their money on.

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Pollution watchdog has bark worse than its bite



Industry should face much harsher penalties for eco-crimes, says the Government's Environment Agency. The huge and powerful new arm of the state was looking back on its first year in existence yesterday.

Nicholas Schoon, Environment Correspondent, reports

Last year the biggest fine the Government's £500m-a-year Environment Agency won from a prosecution was £175,000. In the dock was Severn Trent Water, the second-largest water utility, which killed 25,000 fish in a river in Mid-Wales - its 42nd pollution offence since privatisation in 1989.

It was "the equivalent of a £15 fine on someone earning £30,000 a year", Ed Gallagher, the agency's chief executive, said yesterday. He told the organisation's first annual meeting that big companies can shrug off the little fines they receive for major pollution offences. "These fines are really small change to these companies - they send the wrong signal to the boardroom and the public." He got a sympathetic hearing from the environment minister, Michael Meacher, who attended the meeting of "stakeholders" in London. "The fines are too low and the average is very small," he said. Now he was talking to other ministers about ways of raising the penalties. Magistrates courts can impose a maximum for a pollution offence of £6,000, while in the Crown Court there is no limit. The agency does not want these maxima changed; it just wishes magistrates and judges would use their discretion to push the general level of fines upwards. It also wants the Government to press ahead with plans for a tax on water pollution, announced tentatively in Chancellor Gordon Brown's first Budget. The more consented, legally authorised pollution a company produces the more it should pay, argued Mr Gallagher. And if it breaches its consents it should also have to pay extra, even if it was not taken to court and prosecuted. "The polluter pays principle is one of the few things everyone can agree on," he said.

Friends of the Earth protesters (above) demonstrated outside the meeting, claiming the agency had too cosy a relationship with industry and did not prosecute companies which breached their consents to pollute often enough.

But the pressure group welcomed the call for stiffer fines.

The agency has also decided that any member of staff, any board member and any chair person of one of its numerous advisory committees belonging to a secret society should declare it.

The move follows as yet unsubstantiated suggestions that Freemasons among its officers may be favouring companies it regulates in which senior managers are Masons. Some local councils already have this policy.

Mother guilty of killing her handicapped infant

The mother of a severely handicapped baby girl was yesterday found guilty of killing her daughter by removing a vital breathing tube as she lay in a hospital cot. Julie Watts, 31, a psychiatric nurse, was cleared of murdering 14-month-old Abigail by a jury at Manchester Crown Court but was convicted of manslaughter.

The court was told that Abigail needed round-the-clock care after being born with a rare combination of disabilities that left her unable to breathe or feed without the aid of tubes. She was deaf and blind and suffered brain damage, connected to a rare skull deformity.

Mr Justice Sachs remanded Watts on bail for nine days for reports before sentencing. He told her counsel, Richard Henriques QC: "I have no intention of sending your client into custody, at least not immediately." He said he would require reports on the convicted woman.

Black market raid on bees

Police fear millions of honey bees stolen from the Peak District National Park may be sold on the black market. Thieves took 27 hives worth £4,000, containing about 2.5 million bees and a large quantity of honey, at Beeley Moor, Derbyshire. A gamekeeper patrolling on Sunday discovered the theft.

Police are investigating possible links with an epidemic which has destroyed bee stocks in the south of England. The red grub parasite varroa, originating in India, is blamed for an Aids-type virus which reportedly wiped out 80 per cent of bees in Kent last year and seriously damaged the £12m-a-year honey industry.

Derbyshire Police believed the theft could be linked to this dramatic fall in bee numbers and was probably carried out by someone who knew the trade. Acting Inspector John Roughton said: "We are assuming that this person knew something about bees otherwise they would have to be an absolute idiot. We think they were stolen during the hours of darkness when someone in the know would realise that the bees would be inactive. They have got to have had a large vehicle, probably an open-top truck, to move this sort of equipment and may have been wearing some sort of protection."

Boy, 15, knifed at school

A 15-year-old boy was airlifted to hospital with a kitchen knife embedded in his back after apparently being attacked by a fellow-pupil at school, police said yesterday. The attack took place in a corridor at Christ The King Roman Catholic High School in Preston, Lancashire. Police have arrested a boy, also aged 15, who is being questioned in Preston, and are interviewing other pupils to determine what happened. They are not looking for any other suspects.

The injured boy, who has not yet been named, was taken by helicopter to the Royal Preston Hospital, where doctors removed the knife before he was transferred by ambulance to Blackpool Victoria Hospital. His mother was last night at his bedside. His life was not believed to be in danger.

Detective Inspector Ronald of Lancashire Police said the boy in custody was Asian and the victim was white, but he did not believe it was a racially motivated attack. "It seems this was a dispute between two 15-year-old boys. There is no indication it was racially motivated and no indication of bullying but it was very serious." The headmaster of Christ the King Roman Catholic High School, Gus Van Cammelact, said: "Although everyone is deeply shocked, staff and the pupils reacted magnificently. As the matter is subject to police inquiries I am unable to say any more at this stage."



SFO wants to end trial by jury in complex financial cases

The Serious Fraud Office has failed in a number of high-profile prosecutions over the past 10 years. Now it seems to be blaming juries for those failures. Steve Boggan finds out why.

The head of the Serious Fraud Office and her predecessor have called for an end to the right to trial by jury in complicated financial trials. Rosalind Wright (above right) and George Staple (left) believe the over-simplification of trials to accommodate jurors' lack of specialised knowledge is resulting in prosecutions failing.

The calls met immediate resistance last night from Liberty, formerly the National Council for Civil Liberties, which said it would be "seriously concerned" about any moves to end the right to trial by jury in any type of case.

Instead of 12 ordinary men and women, Ms Wright and Mr Staple would like to see trials heard by some form of panel of experts headed by a judge. Speaking at a symposium on economic crime at Jesus College, Cambridge, Ms Wright, director of the SFO, described the jury system as one of the "pitfalls of the justice system".

The proposal aims to present a complex commercial case to a jury of lay people. It is a move which enables them to understand the intricacies of the commercial transactions and understand the documents, often the most convoluted and intricate sets of accounts," she said. "But this means having to prune a case to its bare essentials, losing, in the process, substantial elements of the total criminality alleged."

Once cases are split into a series of simple transactions "you run the risk of losing the total picture," she said. "You are also in danger of the 'Pandora factor', the ruling by [Mr Justice] Buckley to stop the second [Kevin] Maxwell trial in its tracks as 'unfair' on the accused. ... If you don't split them, you have a huge unmanageable monster of a case."

In a separate interview with *The Independent*, Mr Staple, director of the SFO from April 1992 until April of this year, said only a few extremely complicated cases would be affected. "We are all aware of the civil liberties element of the argument but we are also anxious that the administration of justice should be allowed to flow smoothly," he said. "Fraud is becoming more complicated all the time. People are now talking about fraud in cyberspace over the Internet. Juries of ordinary people already have enormous difficulties understanding many of the technical terms."

Philip Leach, legal officer at Liberty, said the moves would be resisted. "We would have serious concerns about the removal of juries in these kinds of cases." He said juries were "a crucial element of our legal system".

Hashin

On the face of it, Ryutaro Hashimoto is one of the most radical and dynamic Japanese prime ministers since the Second World War. He has charisma, an ambitious programme for reform, and a talent for diplomacy.

But Richard Little, Foreign Office spokesman, says his radical ambitions are any match for the corruption and vested interests of an entrenched political system.

It doesn't take much to see why Hashimoto is so popular. He is a former Japanese prime minister, a former member of the Japanese Diet, and a former member of the Japanese cabinet. He has a long and distinguished career in Japanese politics.

But with his charisma and ambition, Hashimoto is also a man who is not afraid to take on the established order. He has a reputation for being a reformer, and he has a number of ambitious plans for Japan.

Mr Hashimoto's power in January 1997 was at its peak. He had just won the fourth prime ministerial election, and he had a number of ambitious plans for Japan. He was a man who was not afraid to take on the established order.

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Hashimoto takes on red tape and divided party

On the face of it, Ryutaro Hashimoto is one of the most radical and dynamic Japanese prime ministers since the Second World War. He has charisma, an ambitious programme for reform, and a talent for diplomacy.

But Richard Lloyd Parry in Tokyo asks if his radical ambitions are any match for the corruption and vested interests of an entrenched political system.

It doesn't take much to be labelled "good looking" in politics, but by the standards of previous Japanese prime ministers, Ryutaro Hashimoto is something of a heart throb. About the only thing which distinguished his predecessor, the unmemorable Tomiichi Murayama, was a pair of bushy eyebrows. An earlier leader, Kiichi Miyazawa, even earned the nickname "Yoder" for his eerie resemblance to the wrinkled extra-terrestrial in *Return of the Jedi*.

But, with his ear-lobe deep sideburns, smooth complexion and brilliant hair, 60-year-old Mr Hashimoto has been called the Elvis Presley of Japanese politics. After more than a year-and-a-half since becoming prime minister, and despite an alarmingly erratic economy and rising fears about crime and social stability, he is still basking in the hits.

Mr Hashimoto came to power in January last year, the fourth prime minister in two and a half years: already he is the longest serving premier for a decade. Last week, a defection by an opposition MP restored to his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) majority control of the lower house of the Diet (parliament). A few days later, Mr Hashimoto was re-elected unopposed as LDP president. A newspaper poll gave him a personal approval rating of 53 per cent, up 10 per cent in three months.

Mr Hashimoto's policy projects - to reform the financial system, streamline the bureaucracy, and peacefully assert Japanese leadership in Asia - are the most ambitious since the 1980s, and he is being tentatively spoken of as a potentially great prime minister, a confident, modern leader of a country in the midst of radical change. But events of the last week suggest an alternative view: that he is little more than a political pretty boy, a useful front man for a political system which is still a very long way from significant change.

Mr Hashimoto's most clear cut successes have been abroad - he is the first prime minister since Yasuhiro Nakasone in the 1980s who genuinely seems to relish diplomacy. Relations with Japan's most important ally, the United States, have flourished: the two sides have

ironed out long running opposition to US bases in Okinawa which flared up after the rape of a schoolgirl by American Marines. His first major crisis - the storming by terrorists of the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima - ended near perfectly when the Peruvian armed forces freed the hostages with only one casualty.

He negotiated choppy waters by expanding the area in which Japanese armed forces can operate in support of the Americans. The change upset China, arousing angry recollections of the Japanese invasion in the 1930s and latent fears of American encirclement. Mr Hashimoto responded deftly, travelling to the former Japanese colony of Manchuria and expressing "remorse" for the aggression of his forebears.

But the struggle which counts most is not being fought abroad, or even in the Diet, but in Mr Hashimoto's own party. One of the reasons Japanese prime ministers have changed so frequently is that party posts are traditionally shared out between the LDP's powerful factions - parties within a party, whose balanced support is essential to any long lasting leader.

One side of the LDP is made up of conservatives, who want to reunite with former allies who defected to the opposition. On the other side are younger reformers who prefer to maintain a loose alliance with minority centrist parties. In the middle, attempting to please both sides, while pointing vaguely in the direction of reform, is Mr Hashimoto.

The stresses of this position are taking their toll on his toughest and most important job: bureaucratic reform. For 50 years Japan has been ruled by massive government ministries which wield more power than any prime minister has ever had. In an era of globalised, competitive economies, they are seen as an anachronistic drag.

Mr Hashimoto has promised to deal with the situation. The problem is that the power of his party is based on a complex web of relations between bureaucrats and politicians, built up over decades. Many conservatives do not want reform, and the plans so far drafted for the reorganisation of the ministries are disappointing.

The prime minister's attempts to balance new reformers with old conservatives have produced embarrassing anomalies. Last week he celebrated his re-election as party leader with a reshuffle in which he elevated one Koko Sato, a conservative best known for the two year suspended prison sentence for bribery which he received in the 1970s. The job of Mr Sato, or the "Cabinet convict" as he is already known, is to oversee the job of bureaucratic reform, a poor omen for Mr Hashimoto's new era of clean government. Elvis lives, but only for the time being.



Battle dress: Like a samurai warrior of old feudal Japan, Ryutaro Hashimoto has enemies close to home

Mary Evans Picture Library

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12/WORLD NEWS

Asia's green intentions lost in the haze

Indonesia's President Suharto apologised yesterday for forest fires blanketing its neighbouring nations of Singapore and Malaysia in suffocating smoke. His apology came as he opened a meeting of environment ministers from the nine-member Association of South-East Asian Nations in Singapore. The forest fires are a major talking point in the region and a source of widespread public concern.

"To the communities of neighbouring countries who have been disturbed by the fires in our territory, Indonesia offers its most sincere apologies," Mr Suharto said. He said Jakarta was doing its "level best to prevent and overcome the on-going bush and forest fires raging in our country".

Some environmental specialists argue that Indonesia could do more about what is dubbed "haze" in the region. "The talk has been going on for too long," said Mark Harrison, business services manager at Singapore's Regional Institute of Environmental Technology.

"What we're dealing with is a photochemical smog... Calling it a haze as we have done for so long is the typical softy, sully Asian approach. I think it's time to be more robust."

Far right scores well in Norway's election

Norway's prime minister has said he will step down after lukewarm support in last Monday's election. In a country with so much oil wealth it doesn't know what to do with it, the doubling of the far-right party's vote is ringing alarm bells, but none of the parties scrambling to form a coalition will have anything to do with it.

After Norwegians snubbed their Labour government in national elections on Monday, smaller parties were scrambling yesterday to see what coalition - if any - could muster support in a deadlocked parliament.

Making good on his campaign undertaking, the Prime Minister, Thorbjørn Jagland, said that his minority Labour government would step down next month because voters failed to give him the mandate he demanded.

With 97.6 per cent of the vote counted, Labour was the leading party, but its 35.1 per cent was under Mr Jagland's declared minimum of 36.9 per cent - the same as Labour got in the last elections four years ago. The final votes are to be counted today. Labour will have 65 of the 165 seats in parliament.

"I assume the other parties that, during the campaign, said they wanted to form a new government will in fact keep their word," said Mr Jagland when announcing his government would step down after presenting a national budget draft on 13 October.

Apart from Labour's defeat, Norway's traditional political calm was shattered by the stunning success of the far-right Progress Party, which won 15.3 per cent of the vote and 25 seats in parliament - more than double the 6.3 per cent the party got in 1993.

The Progress Party, a neo-Thatcherite grouping led by charismatic former businessman Carl Hagén, gathered the protest votes of Norwegians who feel their massive oil wealth is being poured into the wrong



Congratulations: Kjell Magne Bondevik, head of a three-party centrist coalition, receiving a cake yesterday after he seemed set to become Norway's next prime minister. Photograph: AP

pockets. The Labour government has launched a Petroleum Fund to mop up the billions of oil dollars flooding into the economy, but opinion polls showed Norwegians felt their health and welfare services and schools were suffering.

Even though it becomes the country's second-largest party, Progress is not likely to be invited to join any government. Other parties consider its policies intolerable - especially those calling for tighter immigration and refugee policy.

The next prime minister looks set to be Kjell Magne Bondevik, a former priest and ex-foreign minister who is the head of a three-party centrist coalition that can garner 42 seats. He began the process of trying to put together a coalition government yesterday, though he has a breathing space until mid-October.

"We have confirmed what is most important, that there is a will among all three centrist parties to offer an alternative, and then it will be up to parliament," said Mr Bondevik, after meeting his potential coalition partners.

The political jockeying raises the possibility that none of the small parties will be able to muster enough support for a government and that Labour would return to power.

Warning over EU rebates

France yesterday urged Germany to drop its campaign to secure a big reduction in its net contribution to the European Union budget, warning it could derail the re-ordering of Europe's finances essential for EU enlargement to go ahead. Speaking after talks with British officials in London, Pierre Moscovici, the French Minister for European Affairs, noted Britain had already ruled out any change in the rebate formula negotiated by Margaret Thatcher. "This mustn't become contagious," he said. It would be "a very bad start" for the negotiations if every country insisted on getting its money back.

At a weekend meeting in Luxembourg, German Finance Minister Theo Waigel served notice that the current system, under which Bonn claims to pay 60 per cent of net contributions to the £60bn EU budget, had to change. As it strives to get its budget deficit below the 3 per cent required to qualify for the single currency, Bonn is casting around for every possible saving.

Indonesian deaths prompt riot

Rioting mobs attacked and set fire to stores, houses and vehicles belonging to ethnic Chinese in Ujung Pandang on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi yesterday after two Muslim sisters were hacked to death. Gangs beat a 23-year-old deranged ethnic Chinese man to death. Police said the dead man had attacked the two schoolgirls with a knife as they walked home from Islamic religious class on Monday.

N Korean famine worsens

The German Red Cross yesterday called the famine in North Korea one of the worst the world has seen since the Second World War and said around 10,000 children were dying of starvation every month. German Red Cross spokeswoman Susanne Anger, who had just returned from North Korea, pleaded for more international food and medical aid.

Congo thwarts UN

Laurent Kabila's Democratic Republic of Congo denied UN investigators permission yesterday to hunt for evidence of massacres of Rwandan Hutu refugees in the town of Mbandaka.

Mir crew suffer another narrow escape in space

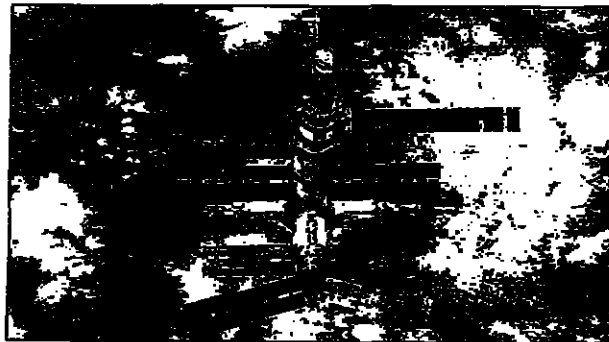
Already dented from one cosmic collision, the *Mir* space station astronauts got another scare on Monday night when an American satellite whizzed by, forcing the crew into its escape capsule for 30 minutes until the danger passed.

The United States military satellite passed within 470 metres of *Mir* (right), its closest brush with an unrelated spacecraft during its 11 years in orbit, said Vera Medvedkova, spokeswoman at Russia's Mission Control, yesterday.

The speed of the US satellite and the reason it shifted into an orbit so close to *Mir*'s were not immediately known.

"The crew was sitting in an escape capsule, in case [the American satellite] grazed the station," said Ms Medvedkova.

In Houston, US space officials gave a different account, saying an inoperative American science satellite passed within 1,200 metres of *Mir*. "It wasn't



anything major," said John Lawrence, a spokesman for the US space agency Nasa. "This happens every month."

Meanwhile a recently returned cosmonaut said in an interview published yesterday that *Mir* was just minutes away from being abandoned after June's collision with a cargo tug.

Alexander Lazutkin, who was the flight engineer when the crash occurred, said he was petrified when he saw the *Progress*

cargo craft drifting inexorably towards its collision with *Mir*. "As soon as it hit, the fear disappeared," he said. "We had to succeed, to survive."

The crew had 24 minutes to seal off the damaged Spektr module from the rest of the complex or abandon ship.

"[The station] shook violently," he said. "Just imagine seven tonnes hitting 130 tonnes at nearly three metres a second."

Karadzic ban lifted amid security fear

The head of the OSCE mission to Bosnia said yesterday he had overruled a decision by his officials to disqualify the main Serb nationalist party from a local poll because of

sub-committee the Serb Dem (SDS) in the Pale, a town near Sarajevo, one of dozens contested in weekend municipal elections throughout Bosnia.

Mr Frowick said he had acted out of concern for the security of international supervisors in the Serb entity, believing that the mainly "symbolic" ban could hinder the implementation of election results and would not significantly reduce Mr Karadzic's influence.

On Monday the OSCE's Election Appeals Sub-Commission (EASC), its judicial arm, moved to strike out the SDS in Pale, saying the party had flouted a ban on political activity by indicted war criminals under the Dayton treaty.

The commission said messages from Mr Karadzic were read out and posters of him stuck up at SDS rallies.

The EASC's ruling said "the SDS must be sanctioned severely if the integrity of the election is to be maintained. For a person indicted for genocide and crimes against humanity to maintain a position or function in one of the leading national parties shocks the conscience".

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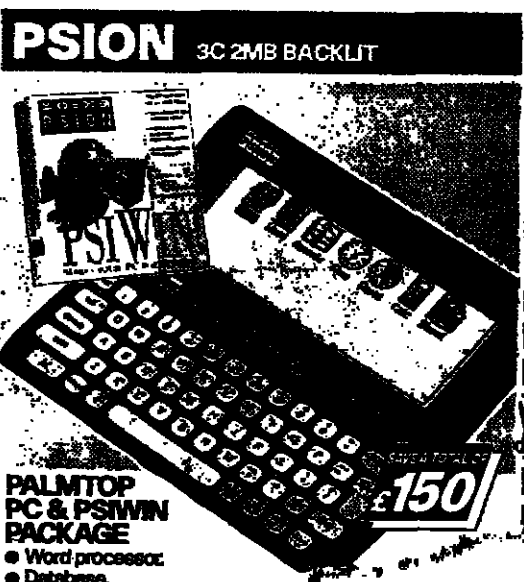
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America broods over army women on parade

A US army survey found that men and women soldiers view each other with increasing resentment and distrust. John Corlin argues that it raises questions that extend to the civilian world about the limits of what is feasible in the battle for gender equality.

"ethics and moral values", courses on gender relations, new videos teaching respect between men and women and the issuing of each soldier with "value cards" reminding them of their responsibilities.

Meanwhile, an official commission headed by a former senator has been established to reappraise the question the army has so far chosen not to address: whether men and women should train and fight together at all.

For now, the traditional feminist position occupies the high ground. Few have dared to come out and challenge the conventional equal-opportunities orthodoxies. One who has is Elaine Donnelly, president of the Centre for Military Readiness, who argues that mixing men and women in the army is a recipe for calamitous indiscipline on the field of battle.

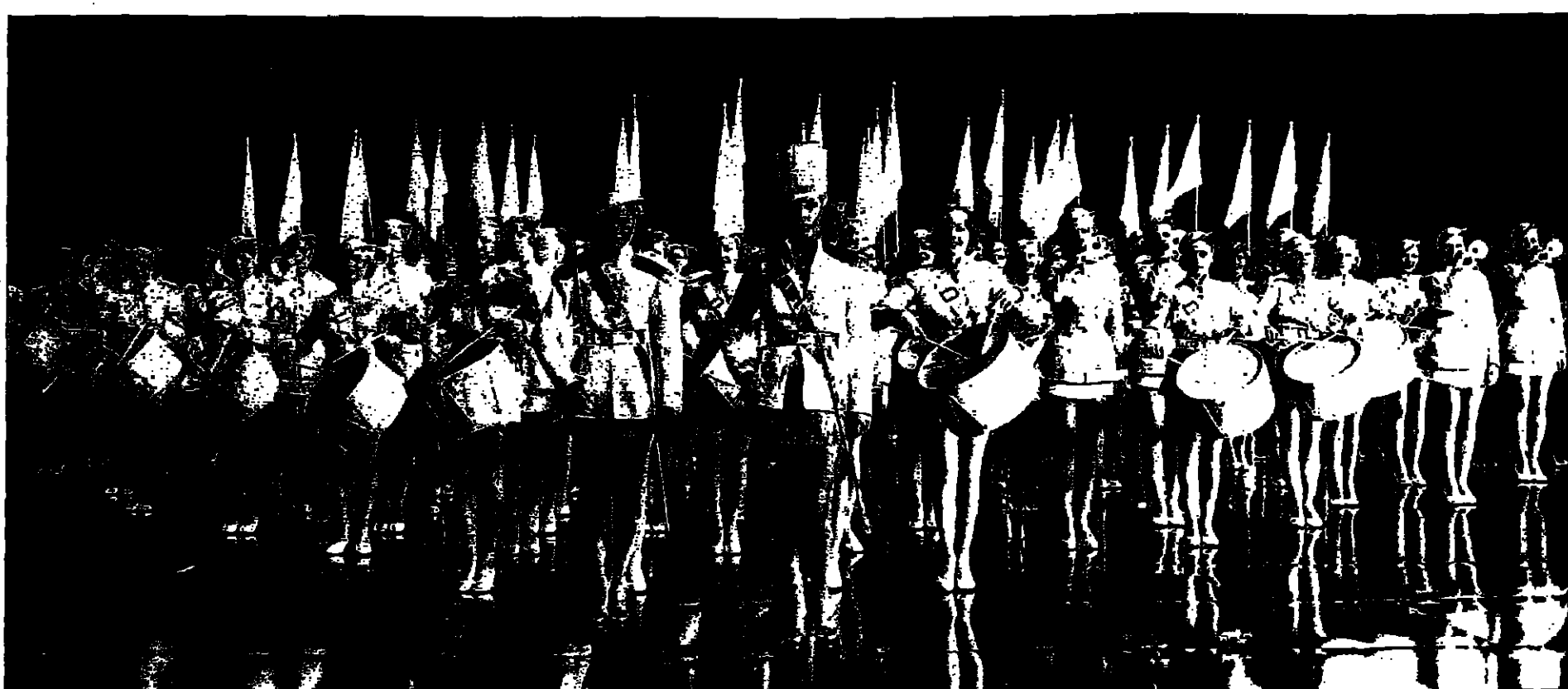
"There's what I call this social fiction that men and women are interchangeable, that standards are the same. They're not," said Ms Donnelly, a member of a presidential commission that looked into the role of women in the military in 1992. "And the issue of sexuality, of human nature, is not going to go away, no matter how many sensitivity training sessions you have."

Decrying the tendency to accommodate "feminist zealots" at the expense of the practical realities of war, she said, "The army is not there to advance women's rights; it is not there to defend men's rights. It is there to defend the country."

There is a rule in the US army under which men below the rank of general are prohibited from carrying umbrellas in uniform. But it does not extend to women soldiers. While this might seem on the face of it to represent a rare case of reverse discrimination, and as such a triumph of sorts for women, it goes to the heart of a controversy raging right now about the role of men and women in the military.

A proposal put forward by a female colonel a year ago for the no-umbrella regulation to be lifted for men has been gathering dust in the Pentagon vaults. "To this day, every time it rains, women with umbrellas are harassed by men," said the author of the proposal, Colonel Vickie Longenecker. "It's like, 'You're special, you get to carry an umbrella'. It's an irritant."

Male soldiers feel much the same way about the preferential treatment their female counterparts receive on matters of physical fitness, one of nu-



A scene from the film *Goldiggers of 1937*, illustrating an idealised role of women in the military

Photograph: Kobal Collection

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Vice-Admiral Patricia A Tracey, the senior ranking woman officer in the US Navy

merous new findings that emerged from an internal army survey conducted over 10 months and based on interviews with 35,000 soldiers.

The conclusions of the survey, released last week, amounted to a harsh indictment of the state of gender relations in the army 20 years after the integration of women in the ranks. Sexual coercion of female trainees by their superiors was widespread and sexual harassment was rampant. More insidious was the general finding that men and women soldiers view each other with wariness and distrust, sapping morale and raising questions about the army's battle readiness. According to one set of statistics, while half the men said they believed women in their units were treated with greater leniency and more favouritism, 80 per cent of the women disagreed.

Male drill sergeants, for example, are especially disgruntled, complaining that for fear of junior female soldiers officers wielding the threat of a sexual harassment case they have gone soft in training, diluting the code of discipline on which an effective army depends.

The army brass, moving sharply to introduce corrective measures, has sought to appease male soldiers' resentment by imposing tougher fitness standards for women recruits. They will now be required to do more push-ups and sit-ups than before and run a two mile course faster than previously required.

The women soldiers' concerns are being addressed the way they might be in the civilian workplace. A "human relations action plan" has been drawn up which recommends a week of training for recruits on

Ms Donnelly is not against women in a segregated army. She notes with satisfaction, indeed, that women officers have kept pace with men on promotions. But the bigger question to which she draws attention is whether the contemporary American zeal for gender equality in all things might selectively be tempered by greater recognition of the limits that biology ineluctably imposes.

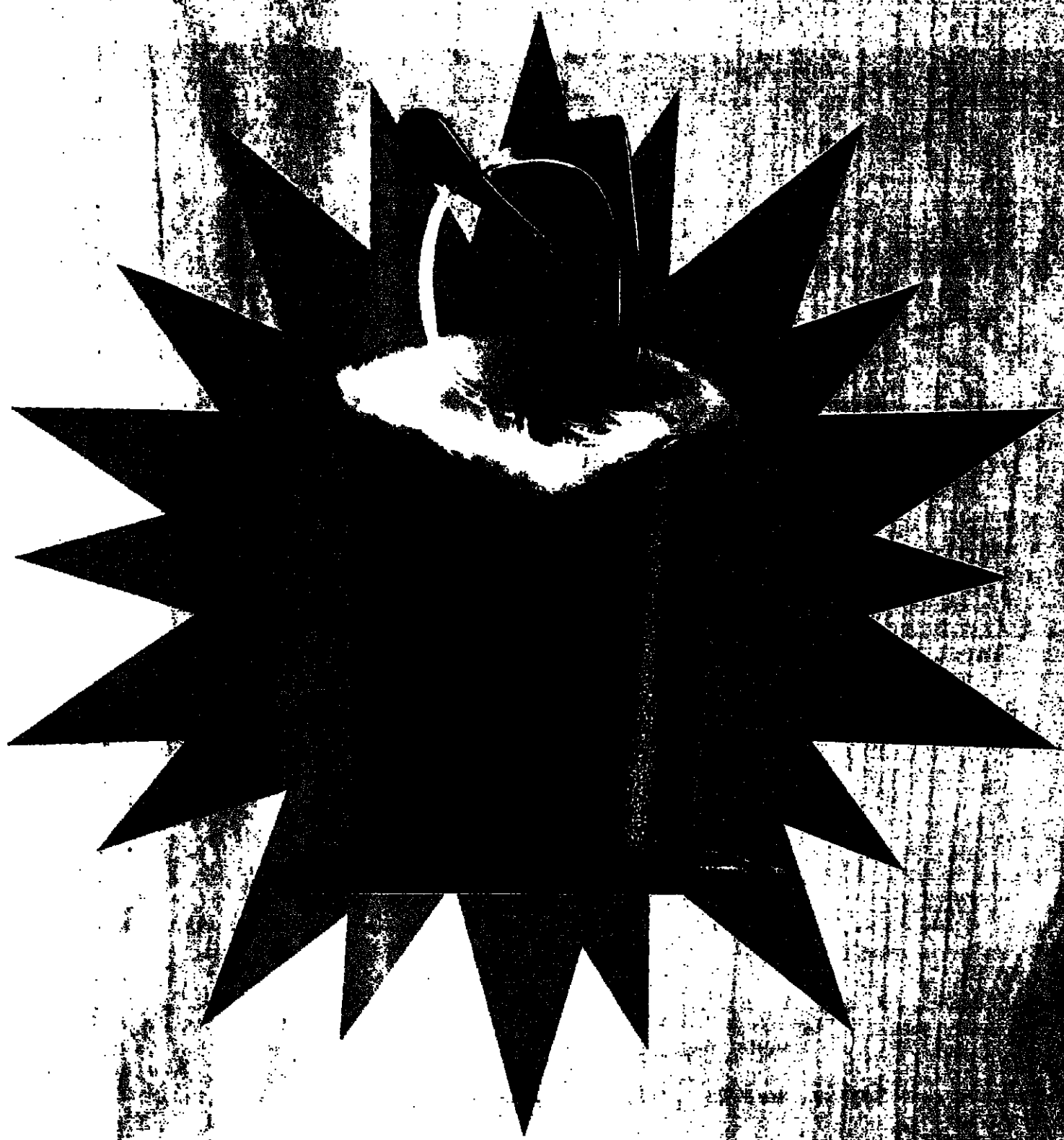
These are, indeed, mixed times for the cause of women in America. On the one hand, there was the news on Monday that Paula Jones's attorney was due to begin discussions with Bill Clinton's lawyers towards a possible settlement of her sexual harassment case against the president. Whatever you think of Ms Jones and Mr Clinton, whether you believe or not her story that he dropped his trousers in front of her in an Arkansas hotel room six years ago, the fact that things have reached this pass marks a victory for women in the evolving power struggle between the sexes.

More open to debate were the consequences of the latest development in the Miss America pageant. Television ratings have been falling in recent years so for this year's event, held on Saturday in Atlantic City, contestants were encouraged to wear bikinis. Not all took up the offer. One who did, Miss Illinois, won.

But the judges, eager to be all things to all persons, said she won not because of her looks but because she had spoken with Diana-like sensitivity on the Aids question and performed a lively rendition of the song, "Don't Rain on My Parade". Which, of course, takes us back to umbrellas.

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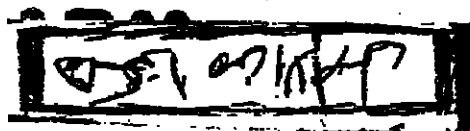
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to death in

of Israeli soldiers
in an ambush in
Lebanon this
week were betrayed by
a double agent
from Israel's
military
intelligence
in Lebanon
and
the most
recent
intelligence
operation. Even the
fact that led the
to their deaths
was by the pro-
palestine, as seen
from
the
report.

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in an ambush in
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15/ISRAEL AMBUSHED

THE INDEPENDENT
WEDNESDAY
17 SEPTEMBER 1997

Double agent lured soldiers to death in Lebanon

The 12 Israeli soldiers killed in an ambush in southern Lebanon this month were betrayed by a Lebanese double agent. It was Israel's greatest military humiliation in Lebanon since 1985 and Hizbollah's most crushing intelligence operation ever. Even the Israeli map that led the soldiers to their deaths was drawn by the pro-Iranian militia, as Robert Fisk writes from Ansouriyeh

The site of Israel's worst military disaster in Lebanon since 1985 has become a place of pilgrimage. Above the burned and broken stumps of evergreen trees, the rags of Israeli uniforms and the scorched leaves, there hangs a series of banners, all declaring the killing of the 12 Israeli raiders as God's work.

Posters praise the Lebanese army - who lit up the night sky with Verey lights when the Israelis arrived at 1.30 in the morning of 5 September - and the Shiite Muslim Amal militia - who came rather late on the scene - and the Hizbollah guerrillas who planned the ambush and President Assad of Syria who knew nothing about it until he read about in the next day's papers. But a young woman who climbed from her car at the scene yesterday caught the Lebanese mood rather well. She pulled apart the blackened strands of barbed wire and stared for almost a minute at the mud and burned trees, hugging her arms to her body. "Thanks be to God," she muttered.

But God had less to do with the ambush of Israel's

supposedly elite commandos than a young Lebanese Muslim man whose cousin is a prisoner in one of Israel's jails and who - blackmailed and bribed - had for more than five years worked for the Israeli army's intelligence service inside southern Lebanon. Israeli ground raids into Lebanon are regularly planned and even accompanied by Lebanese spies. But in an underground war that usually goes unreported in Lebanon, the Hizbollah have steadily been breaking Israel's army of collaborators.

Investigations by *The Independent* leave no room for doubt that a double agent - in his mid-thirties and working for Israel since 1992 - deliberately led the Israeli raiders into a minefield. Even the map carried by the Israeli unit commander, containing details of his soldiers' five-mile trek on foot from the Mediterranean through the olive groves towards the village of Ansouriyeh at 1.30 in the morning - a map supposedly the work of Israel's faithful collaborator - was drawn by Hizbollah officers. Israeli intelligence had been

told - via their "turned" collaborator - that an important Hizbollah leader was staying in Ansouriyeh on the night of 4 September.

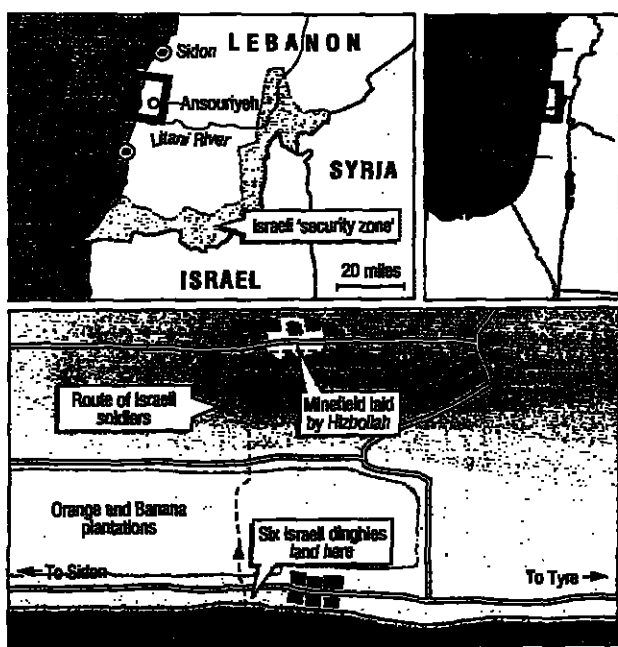
In fact, it was this same leader - the assassination target of the Israelis - who set up what can only be described as a classic guerrilla ambush. Instead of being in the village, he was hiding in the darkness scarcely a mile from the grove of lemon and orange trees through which the Hizbollah map would lead the Israelis - and in which the Hizbollah had already placed dozens of mines, some beneath the ground, others hanging from the branches of the fir trees lining the tiny lane to Ansouriyeh.

Even before the six Israeli naval craft approached the coast with their cargo of dinghies and the 16-man raiding party, the Hizbollah had told local Lebanese army units to prepare for action and that their forthcoming operation was to be named "Abbas Ambush" after Abbas Moussawi, the Hizbollah chairman assassinated in an Israeli helicopter attack in 1992. Unaware that

they were walking into the most carefully laid ambush in Lebanese guerrilla history, the soldiers landed on the beach north of Saqsagieh and set off towards Ansouriyeh, their radio operator in the lead, their commander in the middle, another soldier carrying explosives on his back. The map showed a path running parallel with the village laneway, curtained by tall cypresses which would protect the Israeli soldiers - and conceal the mines that were waiting for them. The first man to step on a mine was the soldier carrying explosives. He was torn to pieces with at least six of his colleagues.

When the Hizbollah opened fire, their battlefield was lit by the Lebanese army's Verey lights - an act that was to cost the army six dead in an Israeli revenge attack last week. What the Hizbollah did not know was that down the laneway would drive a 43-year-old Palestinian - whose husband was in Saudi Arabia - and her very drunk, 35-year-old Lebanese lover. The five surviving Israelis, four of whom were already wounded, poured bullets towards the headlights, killing the woman instantly and hitting her lover six times. When Israeli rescue helicopters arrived 45 minutes later - summoned by the unwounded radio operator - an army doctor was killed when he leapt from one of the machines.

Only the Lebanese double-agent was not there to see his handiwork. He had already been moved to a safe house along with his family, now under the Hizbollah's protection. His was the one uncredited name on the banners now hanging from the burned branches of the trees where the mines once hung. "The trees are talking to each other," one of these sinister messages reads. "The trees said: 'There are Israelis among us - kill them!'"



An Israeli Border policeman arrests a Palestinian yesterday, after he had a dispute with one of his new neighbours in Ras el-Amoud, east Jerusalem, where Jewish settlers occupied two houses
Photograph: Menahem Kahana/APP

Army prepares for guerrilla war

As Israeli settlers turn the houses they occupy in Ras al-Amoud into fortresses in the face of government pleas to evacuate, the Israeli army says it is training its troops for prolonged guerrilla war. A senior officer, speaking anonymously, said the fighting in the occupied territories, conquered by Israel in 1967, would be worse than anything seen in Lebanon.

Assaf Hefetz, the Israeli police commissioner, said yesterday that he feared the settlers'

takeover in Ras al-Amoud would "trigger riots and a renewal of the Palestinian uprising in Jerusalem". Meanwhile Elyakim Rubinstein, the attorney-general, said the government, which is to decide what to do today, had the legal right to remove the settlers.

It is unclear if the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is willing or able to do so in the face of ministers who support the settlers.

Dr Irving Moskowitz, the

Miami multi-millionaire who purchased the properties, said: "This is the first time in millennia that Jews come to the Mount of Olives not to be buried but to live there."

The impact on the life of the 11,000 Palestinians in Ras al-Amoud is significant because the 15 settlers are protected by some 60 paramilitary police who stop and search all Palestinian vehicles entering the street where the settlers live.

So far Palestinian reaction

has been limited, with only small demonstrations, although Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, is to meet with Arab foreign ministers and tour Europe. Potentially more effective is a United States demand that Israel remove the settlers, saying that their action was contrary to the demand of Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, when in Israel last week, that the Israeli government refrain from "unilateral actions".

- Patrick Cockburn

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16/DEATH ON THE ROADS

Drive to keep drug takers out of cars

More and more motorists are believed to be taking drugs and driving. Jason Bennetto, Crime Correspondent, looks at how the police and the Government are trying to find ways of stopping them causing mayhem on the roads.

Roadside drug tests for motorists suspected of taking illegal substances are to be piloted under plans being examined by the Department of Transport.

More than 100,000 motorists could be driving under the influence of drugs, according to the early findings of a three-year study. It confirmed findings that a quarter of those involved in 465 road-traffic deaths in Britain in the past 11 months had taken drugs. Twenty per cent were illicit substances, mainly cannabis, and 5 per cent were medical drugs.

A police-DoT working group is examining the issue of drug-taking and driving amid evidence that it is one of the fastest-growing motoring problems. National roadside testing is considered inevitable, although there are still problems with developing a workable system.

There are also proposals to prosecute all motorists found with traces of drugs, whatever the amount, in their bodies, which could result in someone who had smoked cannabis weeks before being jailed.

The latest results of the drug-driving testing were discussed at the Superintendents' Association conference in Bristol yesterday. It emerged that the DoT is considering setting up roadside drug tests in a number of police forces in about

nine months. Officers are expected to use bodywipes which can detect individual drugs.

The wipes are attached to a short stick and rubbed against the suspect's forehead and neck. It changes colour if a drug is detected, although only one substance can be tested at a time.

Motorists taking part in trials would be volunteers and would escape arrest if positively tested unless their driving was considered impaired.

The police scientific branch is working on developing a roadside test and is expected to report in spring.

If a practical testing system is developed and the Government changes the law to allow roadside stops, the police believe a national scheme could be operating within three years.

Superintendent David Rowe, chairman of the Association of Chief Police Officers' working party looking on the issue, yesterday called for a zero-tolerance rate for motorists found with drugs in their bodies. It was too difficult to set limits and to let off motorists found to have taken illegal substances was "tantamount to condoning drug taking".

If a zero limit was set, motorists who took substances such as cannabis, which can remain in the bloodstream for up to four months, could be prosecuted long after the drug remained potent.

This could lead to allegations that the police were deliberately targeting certain groups considered to be heavy drug-users.

Supt Rowe said the problem they had uncovered was the "tip of the iceberg": of 679,000 people who gave a negative breath test in 1996, up to 120,000 could have taken drugs if the recent survey reflected the national picture.

DANGER SUBSTANCES

Incidence of drugs in road accident fatalities

No drugs detected 351

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| Amphetamines | 10 |
| Cannabis | 43 |
| Cocaine | 0 |
| Opiates | 14 |
| Methadone | 3 |
| LSD | 0 |
| Benzodiazepines | 10 |
| Tricyclic | 3 |
| Antidepressants | 3 |
| Multiple drugs | 31 |

Total 465



Test case: A motorist using a breathalyser. Soon drivers could also be checked for a range of other substances

Photograph: John Lawrence

Shock tactics aim to cut speeding

The Government's latest series of shocking adverts are designed to make speeding as unacceptable as drink-driving. Randeep Ramesh, Transport Correspondent, reports on how ministers want to end the killing sprees of speed.

Ministers launched their hard-hitting "kill your speed" campaign yesterday aimed at reducing the death toll on the nation's roads caused by the thoughtless speeding of motorists.

The campaign includes TV adverts showing real-life video footage of happily playing children who were later killed by speeding motorists. The Government is determined to reduce deaths caused by speeding, which last year was linked to more than 1,000 deaths. Baroness Hayman, minister for roads, told journalists that the campaign would have been pulled if it had caused further distress to Buckingham Palace or the Spencer family following the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

The £3.7m campaign - part

of the "Kill Your Speed" initiative - features four children who are seen in home videos. One is William Blacklock, 13, who was knocked down and killed by a 19-year-old speeding motorist on a zebra crossing near his home in Olney, Buckinghamshire, in 1994.

Baroness Hayman said the Government was committed to creating a climate in which speeding was as socially unacceptable as drink-driving.

The Government was considering a number of measures that would encourage motorists to slow down. Baroness Hayman said 20mph zones were proving "particularly effective" in reducing crashes.

Another option considered by civil servants was to increase the number of speed cameras on Britain's roads. To fund the new initiatives, money generated by fines would be used to buy more speed cameras. "We need to be careful that we improve road safety and not just raise revenue," said Baroness Hayman.

Motoring organisations welcomed the anti-speed campaign. The AA said: "We fully support the government's stance. More cameras would also be useful if they were targeted at accident blackspots and traffic lights."

DAILY POEM

Pied Beauty

by Gerard Manley Hopkins

Glory be to God for dappled things -
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced - fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

This week's poems come from the new *Faber Book of Beasts*: an anthology of "some of the best poems in English about the creatures who share our planet", edited by Paul Muldoon (Faber & Faber, £14.99).

هذا من الأصل

17/YOUTH CULTURE

THE INDEPENDENT
WEDNESDAY
17 SEPTEMBER 1997

Judge Jules is Radio 1's new dance weapon

Radio 1 has poached its fourth star disc jockey from its rival station, Kiss FM, as it moves itself relentlessly into the dance music arena.

Judge Jules, one of the best-known club and dance music DJs in the country, has followed Danny Rampling, Dave Pearce and Lisa L'Anson on the trip from Kiss's trendy north London headquarters to the more sober surroundings of Broadcasting House.

In the anonymous world of dance music, the DJs have replaced bands and singers as the stars. They go on tours of clubs and produce records just like old-fashioned bands and Radio 1 has been signing up a team around its home-grown grandfather of dance DJs, Pete Tong.

The addition of Judge Jules to Radio 1's schedule will see

output devoted to dance music increase to a rather mammoth 10 hours every Friday and 13 hours every Saturday, with another four hours on Sunday night. In all, the station - which has parted company over the last four years with its old star DJs such as Simon Bates and Dave Lee Travis - is now devoting 34 hours a week to dance music.

The dance music boom now covers such a bewildering array of styles from jungle, drum and bass and speed garage to handbag house, techno and trance that Radio 1 has changed its rules on creating a playlist. "It used to be put together by the suits," said a Radio 1 spokesman. "Now all the DJs, producers and specialists can come along."

— Paul McCann



Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Rave treatment: Problems facing clubbers include 'PVC bottom', 'clubber's finger' and facial cigarette burns

Dangers that lurk in the shadows of clubland

Every weekend, millions of young people take illegal drugs and dance in dark rooms filled with loud music. But there are many dangers lurking in the shadows. Next month a meeting of club owners, doctors and police will discuss how to make it a safe pastime. **Paul McCann reports.**

"PVC Bottom" may sound like something attached to a kitchen implement but it is in fact one of the more minor ailments that can affect clubbers.

"PVC Bottom" is when girls wear a pair of PVC shorts to nightclubs without underwear and dance for six or seven hours. Accident and emergency departments report dozens of cases of severe chafing, almost like burns, caused by the friction of PVC on flesh.

It is just one of a number of unique health concerns raised

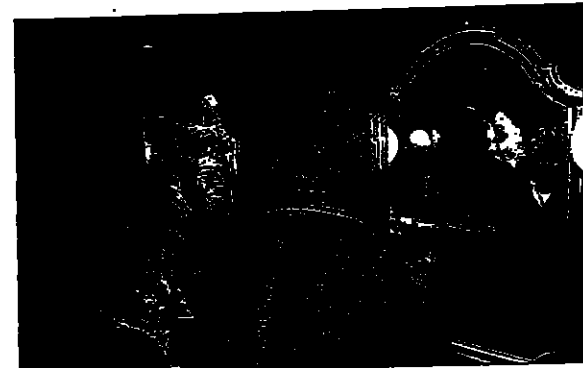
there are other, smaller clubs, that send us dozens of problems every weekend. Clubbing now accounts for a very large proportion of what the young population does. It is our concern that all clubs they go to should be made safe.

The conference will also recommend the provision of "chill out" areas to allow dancers to cool down and the provision of free water to rehydrate clubbers who have taken ecstasy.

It will be addressed by George Howarth, the Home Office minister, drug counselors, policemen and doctors, but the sponsors of the conference, the so-called "superclub" Cream in Liverpool, Liverpool University and the North West NHS also want clubbers to go.

One of the subjects up for debate will be whether clubbers should be able to get ecstasy tested, as they can in Amsterdam, to make sure they are not buying dangerous cocktails.

Already up and running are leafleting campaigns at some clubs to let people know what chemicals ecstasy can contain.



Floor plan: Clubs want better care for injured dancers
Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

by the massive popularity of clubbing that will be discussed at an upcoming conference trying to make clubs healthier.

Other strange club-related injuries include "clubber's finger" which is where dancers try to dislodge what they think is a cigarette butt stuck to the bottom of their shoe only to discover it is a piece of broken glass, which causes tiny lacerations to fingertips. Cigarette burns in the face are also a worry - these are due to people waving their arms around as they dance with a lit cigarette - as are torn calf muscles or tendons from hours of dancing.

The concern of the conference, Health of the Clubbing Nation, will be to try to bring smaller nightclubs up to scratch with the famous big-name clubs which have their own medical teams and security.

"We see around 1,000 admissions a year from nightclubs," said Dr Christopher Luke, a consultant at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital's accident and emergency department. "Only one or two of them are from the biggest club of all, Cream, which has its own medical team and well-trained staff. Naming no names

A concern for the ground-breaking HIT drug-counselling team in Liverpool is that the Bill by the MP Barry Legg to close down any clubs where drugs have been taken is not an impediment to getting a health message across to club owners and club-goers.

Despite the media focus on ecstasy the conference will also hear that 80 per cent of admissions to hospitals from clubs are caused by drinking and violence compared with just 10 per cent due to ecstasy problems such as panic attacks.

Dr Luke also reflects the experience of many clubbers that ecstasy can make a safer environment: "In clubs where ecstasy exists the level of violence is appreciably lower. Where drink is the main cultural vehicle, violence is endemic," he said.

The conference will cover the entire clubbing from getting in to sexual relations so there is a representative from the National Association of Licensed Door Supervisors and one from the Brook Advisory Centres to talk about sexual health.

● The Health of the Clubbing Nation, Cream nightclub, Liverpool, 31 October

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Karen Kingston: 'After I'd been going to Bali on holiday for four years I decided it was time to get a man to go with the lifestyle'

Photograph: Kalpesh Lathiga

If you want to sort out your life, sort out your cupboards first

For Karen Kingston, part New Age thinker, part businesswoman, space-clearing has become a way of life. It's a philosophy that has shown her the path from basement gloom to enlightenment and a surprise best-selling book.

Ann Treneman met her.

Karen Kingston may look entirely ordinary as she sits in her paprika trouser suit and sips an apple juice, but she is anything but. "Look," she says, leaning forward, "even five years ago I wouldn't have talked about this to someone that I didn't know." She still seems a little nervous, but then she is New Age with capital letters and has come to explain to me something she invented called "space clearing" and to discuss her best-selling book on the subject. But first we talk numbers. "It's sold 50,000 copies here and 50,000 copies in the States in a very short time." The first UK print run was only a few thousand, and there have been six reprints in the UK during the first year. "In the States it's gone completely mainstream and has been put right in the home dec-

orating sections."

Creating Sacred Space with Feng Shui may have some terrific chapters on how to clear your clutter, but the rest is about space-clearing and there is nothing mainstream about that. "The best way to describe it," says Karen, "is that each place has an atmosphere or energy frequency and I have devised a 21-step programme to clear out the old atmospheres and put in a new one of your own."

Confused? Let's start from the beginning. "I rented lots of places and some of them were ghastly," she explains. "I had been worked very hard to develop my intuition and I had started being sensitive to places."

"The turning point for me was a ground-floor flat. It just had this awful energy. It was so dark and despairing and I noticed that while I was there I began to change. I became insular and started to become depressed. I had an unhappy love affair when I was in that place."

Karen, now in her forties, was New Age long before it was fashionable. "It was in that flat that I started to do these space-clearing techniques that I had been developing."

What, like spring cleaning? "No! I go around clapping and

ringing bells and this kind of thing."

So, more like an exorcism? "No, I've never experienced any spirits or anything like that. It was a house built in the 1920s and it had never been lived in by anyone who was affluent or very happy. This energy had simply built up and got lodged there. I had moved in and it had affected me."

"Then I started changing the energy, through various techniques using sound. I just used clapping and an old school bell."

Space-clearing takes in many aspects of feng shui, the Chinese art of home arrangement, and other New Age practices, but the lessons of that first flat still stand. Karen is convinced that places, like people, have patterns. So if one couple quarrels continually in a house she would expect the next couple to do so. If the company that was previously in your office went bankrupt, start to worry now.

But the first thing you have to do is clear out the clutter. You cannot space-clear a house if you cannot get in the front door (as was the case with one of her Australian clients years ago).

The idea is that everything that you don't either love or use must go. Otherwise energy becomes stagnant and people get stuck in ruts. Many people nev-

er get beyond this part of the book, as they send for a skip and head for the attic.

Karen believes that as people sort out their belongings, they also sort out their lives. Of course, some go overboard. "This one woman wrote to say that she was moving to a new house and that all she was taking was my book, her husband, the children, animals, plants, a bell and some candles. I get letters like that."

The key to Karen's success is the way she manages to promote her esoteric theories in practical ways. It is impossible not to laugh at some of her stories (or to be envious of a lifestyle that involves living half the year in Bali and half in London: she fell in love with the island after a chance visit and was astonished to find a culture in which space-clearing has long been a way of life). For instance, she tells this one about how she found true love.

"After I'd been going to Bali on holiday for four years I decided it was time to get a man to go with the lifestyle." She grins at this. "So I wrote my shopping list. You have to be specific about these kinds of things. Height, eye colour, sexual stamina, everything."

"By this time I was doing a lot of feng shui work and I knew I had to create space for this

new relationship. At the time I had two wardrobes of clothes. I knew that one had to go and I cleared it. I also had a big chest of drawers. I thought that he would be travelling light - I knew I wanted a Balinese - and so I only cleared one drawer. I would lie in the bath every morning and visualise this man in my bed."

Then she went to Bali. Within weeks she had found Mr Right. Within months he was on his way back to England. When he came to the flat Karen showed him his wardrobe and drawer. "He said 'My God, were you expecting me?' Since then, nothing surprises him."

Except for the fact that she gets paid for space-clearing. "He thinks that is a hoot!" She charges £100 an hour and makes a good living from her triangular career of author, workshop presenter and space-clearer. She is upfront about money, and her attitude towards feng shui is refreshing, too. "Fish tanks? Don't use 'em." But the feng shui boom has fitted her own purposes - it is no mistake that it appears in her book title - and she seems aware of all sorts of bottom lines. "Are you going to put the phone number in? I'd like to create some work for my team."

Then she goes rather cosmic again: "The great clue for try-

ing to create something in your life is not to care whether something happens or not. It didn't matter to me how the book sold. I make more than enough money from my workshops and consultations, so the book was an extra. This meant I was able to set impossible goals for it. I wanted to see it in every airport in the world, and I wanted it to be in WH Smith. People kept saying, 'But Karen, WH Smith does not buy these kinds of titles.' They were wrong - and Karen also claims to have seen it at several airports. "Of course, it may be that they take the stands down after I pass by!"

Her new project is a book called *Clear Your Clutter and Change Your Life!* It will come out next year. Her hands outline a shape. "It has to be small so it doesn't constitute clutter!" She says people are fascinated by the subject. "People come up to me and say: 'Karen, can I just ask you one quick question?' That's the phrase they use. I think it is a fundamental part of human nature to want to know about yourself."

I bite my tongue and swallow my one quick question about what it means to have a seriously out-of-tune piano in one corner of the lounge, even though, for one moment, I really thought I needed to know.



BELOVED AND BONK Diary of a divorce

My husband has just left me so the dog has begun to chase the chickens again. She has caught the sparks from the thunderbolt that has struck us all. This has meant that at moments of highest drama, such as - ME: "Don't you remember making love in the shower when we had a flat full of guests?" HIM: "I never liked that green paint in the bathroom," we have to break off so I can scream myself hoarse at the bottom of the garden amid squawking fowls and a boxer with neon eyes.

It is the sort of thing we would have laughed ourselves silly over a few weeks ago but there seems to have been a bit of a sense-of-humour failure since Beloved came home and announced his imminent departure to be with Bonk in a Notting Hill love-nest.

It's all in a perfectly noble cause, mind you: Personal Growth - his - and as he so very generously says, mine too. Sweet, really. I spent my first night of personal growth lying face down on our lawn chewing grass and keening into the worm casts. I have been doing lots of similar enhanced development work every night since.

Sadly, Beloved finds my reactions a little embarrassing. Having been brave enough to break free from the constraining shackles of marriage, he is standing in a shiny new world washed clean of all the cloying shards of years of wasted past. So when I finally lost it yesterday, and smashed our entire dinner service (very neatly in a skip) and sliced up my arms for good measure, he was tight-lipped. He told me tersely to change my trousers because the children would be upset if they saw the blood. Later he asked if there was anything that "sparked it off".

At moments like this, headlines flash before my eyes - such as "Aliens Stole My Husband". Is this the same man who used to balance peanuts on his nose for my entertainment and do walrus impersonations?

Of course, those were the days when M & S boxers were acceptable and he was happy to cycle to work looking a total nerd in one of those back-to-front helmets. Nothing much short of Paul Smith and Calvin Klein on his botchy these days, and precious little peanut balancing since he became a weekly boarder in London and could officially say he was a film director. Not a great deal of smiling, either. Do you ever see a film director smiling?

I blame it on the telly, driving nice staff out into the nasty corrupting world of free-lance where they drink testosterone with egomania chasers. London media freelancers did for Beloved, poor lamb. He rediscovered the joys of single life, this time not as a poor student but as a grown-up with serious dosh, glam job and a Clerkenwell flat. Coming home to a wife who knows her chickens by name and worries if the wind will snap her rudbeckias must have begun to seem a pretty unattractive option. I mean, compared with giving Bonk a once-over against the glittering backdrop of the City skyline...

So I'm coming to terms with it all by thinking of it as a style decision. A country wife and kids just didn't fit with Beloved's Criterion dinners and Armani trews. Like wearing wellies to the Bahamas. With us still attached he could never have that ultimate media accessory: a divorce. It was simply a decision forced on him by circumstances.

So what man would fit my new style? What exactly does match a divorcee with two kids and a rudbeckia fixation? Well, let's put it this way - ain't no point ringing Alan Rickman and telling him I'm finally free. Something more countrified might be suitable and more accessible (since the rudbeckias and chickens don't allow travelling for sex). I've never really fancied anything in tweeds but after 20 years of regular delightful boinking and now two weeks without, I may have to lower my standards.

Or would it be simpler to have a sex clause in the divorce settlement agreement? You know, the cost of the mortgage, the Aga service and two sessions every month. I'll have to ask the lawyer. Watch this space.

Stevie Morgan

Close encounters of the Alan Clark kind

Alan Clark may be an irresistible figure in the national landscape, but in Saltwood village (population 721) he is simply unmissable. Robert Verkaik grew up at the foot of Clark's castle drive

You, dear reader, may sit in your armchair watching his elegant television history of the Tory party or leaf through his *Diaries* savouring the *de-haut-en-bas* barbs and amazing tales of lechery but I, brought up in the shadow of his beautiful castle in Saltwood, never walk past the place without a wary eye on the battlements. Because I remember how his sons once took potshots from those battlements at village boys out conkering.

Alan Clark may have a special place in the national consciousness, but in Saltwood we see him close up. You might expect his castle would have a moat; on warm summer mornings we see him swimming in it. You know about his vintage

cars; we see him in leather driving hat and goggles whizzing round the village being Toad of Toad Hall.

A 69-year-old Lothario? Neighbours are used to him appearing at the castle gate in trampish garb - scruffy jumper and baggy trousers set off by a green woolly "Benny" hat. Seen like that, he is not the last of the red-hot lovers but there are still red-hot political issues: will he build a hospice on the area of his local allotments? Will he ever re-allow open days at the castle? He stopped them because he said there was continued pilfering (including the main key to the castle gate).

Such is the effect of great men up close. Tom Fuller, 18, still lives opposite the castle estate and used to be the Clarks' paper boy. Occasionally Clark gives him a lift up the hill in one of his motor cars. Tom is duly grateful, but wonders if the presence of his girlfriend in a miniskirt might have something to do with it. And then last year the Fullers' cat, admittedly on castle grounds, was savaged by

one of the Clark Rottweilers (the ones that attacked a BBC film crew on the day Clark was selected as MP for Kensington and Chelsea). Then there are the casualties of the *Diaries*: the fat wife of a parish councillor whom he caught "stealing" firewood from the castle grounds. And the "incredibly tiresome" woman behind him at a Christmas service who "RADA'd up" the responses during the prayers, and her "buffer" of a husband who "blundered in occasionally, nicotine tones, and always out of time so that momentarily he came to be leading some of the prayers".

Many of the villagers have felt his famous bark. Chris Capon is a well known local Tory councillor who has been Clark's postman and friend for over 20 years. As postman he often found himself the victim of the "Clark bark", reserved for poorly performing tradesmen and trespassers. Postman Capon got the full blasting with, "POSTMAN!!! don't bloody well slam the door," every time he banged the wooden portcullis too loudly and dis-

turbed the blackbird nesting in the castle letter box. Says Mr Capon: "He's certainly got quite a temper," but adds, "people admire his outspokenness and the way he conducts his life. He is what he is and doesn't pounce around the village saying I'm Alan Clark."

Despite all this, in the village itself, there is a cross-party hardcore of local people who are fiercely loyal to their glamorous castellan. Even Saltwood and Hythe Labour party organiser, Bernard Sealy, admits to a grudging admiration, expressing a preference for Clark as his local MP rather than the current incumbent Michael Howard. Says Mr Sealy: "I think he's fairly honest. When he's drunk he says he's drunk and not on tablets. And I don't think he would do anyone down unless they had an attractive wife or daughter."

So settle in your armchair, dear reader, the effect of great men close up may be just the same as at a distance after all. Alan Clark's *History of the Tory Party* is on Sundays, 8.30pm, on BBC2



هكذا من الأناصل

19/FASHION



Four ages of woman, all of them young

Schoolgirl, student, working girl, granny: all those looks are on offer this autumn from top designers and from the high street shops that make their looks affordable. So far, so good. But a word of warning, writes Tamsin Blanchard, you'd better not be too old - or it could all go terribly wrong. Photographs are by Vikki Jackman

This autumn, designers have come clean on their fixation for youth. They have done little to disguise the fact that their dream customer is a precocious, 6ft-tall 13-year-old with strong ankles, used to wearing 4in heels and possessed of more dash than sense. They have even taken their inspiration from the school playground, although think St Trinians and the Bash Street Kids rather than Cheltenham Ladies' College. John Galiano, for one, has designed the ultimate school uniform guaranteed to send mothers and headmistresses into a frenzy. Blazers are two sizes too small, skirts just about cover knickers and short socks are worn with stiletto heels.

In reality, of course, it is only the women who are old enough to have a child of school age who are likely to have earned enough money to be able to afford £700 for a school blazer. And would such a woman really want to go into competition with her lithe and adolescent daughter? It's not just Galiano and a handful of other designers who think so. The high-street chains have joined the conspiracy too: At Jigsaw, (or Marks & Spencer, for that matter) you can buy a V-neck tank top just like the one your brother used to wear when he was in the fifth form, and at Hobbs, the chain you always thought was for serious women, there are flighty little grey miniskirts like the ones your brother used to chase when he was a sixth-former. Not all designers and chain stores are caught in the schoolgirl groove, however. Other ages of women have also caught their collective imagi-

nation, such as Bohemian student, working girl, and granny too. Perhaps the headmistress can get a look in after all.

The twentysomething student who shops at charity stores, car boot sales and flea markets is a perennial inspiration for design teams. They love her mismatched, make-do-and-mend style, from the Fifties embroidered cardigans she haggles over to the Thirties tea dresses and bits of under-slip she finds in the £5 box. For women who have never outgrown student days, but who don't like the smell of mothballs, designers such as the Italians Anna Molinari, and Dolce e Gabbana as well as London-based Clements Ribeiro, themselves not so long out of college to have forgotten, are for you. On the high street, Monsoon has a precious beaded shift dress, while Biba, reinvented for the Nineties, has embroidered cardigans that might just pass for second-hand.

If you're beyond the charm of student style, and looking for something a little more strong and strident, how about a dose of good, old-fashioned power dressing? As you may have heard, the Eighties are back in fashion. Hard-edged aggression has re-entered the fashion designer's lexicon by means of killer heels, pinstripe suits and knock 'em dead shoulder pads. If you're having problems being taken seriously at work, you needn't. Depending on your salary, go for Gucci spike heels, Pearce Fiona trouser suits, or Givenchy make-a-pass-at-me-and-I'll-show-you-what-a-stil-etto-heel-in-your-foot-feels-like miniskirts. If you haven't quite reached those dizzy heights on the pay scale, Warehouse and Morgan have just the thing to help you on your way, including a grey flannel bustier and a sharply tailored suit. Oasis and Karen Millen can supply the leather skirt. Just add metallic spike shoes from Russell and Bromley and there will be no stopping you.

Any woman who donned her power suit and lip gloss and hit the glass ceiling in the Eighties and is still there, may be just about burnt-out enough to think about downshifting or retiring altogether. That does not mean fashion has forgotten her. The other extreme to the naughty schoolgirl look is that of granny chic, another look that

has been hawked about the catwalks since Prada rediscovered square-toe shoes and retro patterns. Miss Jean Brodie tweeds, bouclé wools, kick-pleat skirts and sensible heels form another key look for winter. Karen Millen has jumpers reminiscent of Sixties wallpaper; Jigsaw, French Connection, and Hobbs have enough checks, tweeds and kick-pleats to see you into early retirement.

Of course, if you don't fit into any of these stereotypes you can always do a bit of pick 'n' mix and wear your tweedy check skirt with a high-rise-shoulder jacket and a pair of cosy slippers. Take the fashion designer's advice: if you're young enough, you can get away with anything.

Stylist: Charlie Harrington
Make up: Alex Babiky
Model: Annica at Select
Photographer's assistant: Sarah Greenwood

Main picture: 'student'
Black beaded shift with roses, £25, by Monsoon (for your nearest branch, call 071-383 3000); black cardigan with embroidered rose, £69.95, by Biba, 15 Shorts Gardens, London WC2 (enquiries, 071-226 0788); black leather shoes with strap and rose, £44.99, by Ravel (enquiries, 071-631 0224); black fishnet tights, £3.99, by Jonathan Aston, from branches of Fenwick nationwide (for further information, call 071-629 9161)

Top left: 'schoolgirl'
Worst wool crepe A-line wrap skirt in charcoal, £49.99, by Hobbs (enquiries, 071-586 5550); grey skinnyrib V-neck tank top, £39.95, by Jigsaw (for your nearest branch, call 071-491 4484); striped scarf, £21.99, by Accessorise (for nearest branch, call 071-383 3000); grey wool socks, £4.30, by Wolsey, at Debenhams branches (enquiries, 016 262 6755); black patent leather loafers, £30, at selected branches of Marks & Spencer (call 071-925 4422 for further information)

(enquiries, 071-383 2888); grey wool bustier, £30, by Warehouse (enquiries, 071-278 3491); metallic snakeskin shoes with metal heel, £155, by Russell & Bromley (for stockists, call 071-629 6903)

Top right: 'granny'
Camel, brown checked V-neck jumper, £69.95, by Karen Millen (01622 664 032); check tweed skirt with front kick-pleat, £52, by Jigsaw (enquiries, 071-491 4484); scarf, £10.99, by Accessorise; rust lace-up boots, £15, by Fred A Terre, 102 Kensington High Street, London W8; cotton velvet deluxe tights, £20, by Wolford (for your nearest stockist, call 071-925 9202)

Top centre: 'working girl'
Grey trousers with black piping, £59.99, and grey fitted jacket, £19.99, by Morgan

COMPETITION

Wanted: Young Catwalk Photographer of the Year

The Independent is launching a competition in conjunction with Clothes Show Live and Fujifilm to find the Young Catwalk Photographer of the Year. To enter, all you need to do is think "fashion-in-action", get out on the streets with your camera, and be creative. Great catwalk photography is all about catching a moment, and a look. Capturing style on the streets is a good starting-point.

A panel of judges, to include Tamsin Blanchard, fashion editor of The Independent, the veteran catwalk photographer Chris Moore, Caryn Franklin, presenter of The Clothes Show, and a representative from Fujifilm, will choose five finalists to attend Clothes Show Live and photograph the catwalk show on Friday, 5 December. The winning picture will be chosen from those taken on the day.

First prize is a Fujifilm GA645AF Autofocus camera worth £995, and the chance to assist The Independent's catwalk photographer during London Fashion Week in February, with the winning shot published in The Independent, and two tickets to Clothes Show Live 97. Two runners-up will receive £200 worth of Fuji Professional film, and two tickets to Clothes Show Live 97.

Rules
● Entrants to submit three "fashion-in-action" photographs to Young Catwalk Photographer of the Year, Fashion Department, The Independent, 18th Floor, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, by the closing date of Friday 24 October 1997
● All photographs should be captioned clearly, stating the name and address of the entrant

● There is no cash alternative
● The judges' decision is final
No correspondence can be entered into by the organisers
● The organisers reserve the right to cancel the competition
● The winner and runner-ups must co-operate fully for publicity purposes if required
● Entrants must provide their own travel to and from Clothes Show Live 97 on Friday, 5 December 1997



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IN17/9

Mistakes, he's had a few, but then again, too few to mention

Richard Eyre is about to hand over the artistic direction of the National Theatre to Trevor Nunn. In the midst of rehearsing his final show, he talks to David Benedict about the past 10 years and how he played them his way

Although he abandoned his brief acting career years ago – “I didn’t travel far, but at least I learnt from the journey” – last year Richard Eyre had an uncredited cameo role in a National Theatre production. Nobody saw him. In fact, his appearance was entirely fictional. He was conjured up as a character in *Violin Time*, a deliciously ludicrous comic monologue by Ken Campbell, Britain’s comic maestro of theatrical anarchy. Campbell spun a yarn in which Eyre warned him of a dire predicament: “You are the victim of Farnation of Character... They’ve got you on the hamster/gerbil treadmill now. It means your next show has got to be better than they said your last one was.” Campbell is still spinning, but two weeks from today Eyre will open his production of Tom Stoppard’s *The Invention of Love*, his National Theatre swansong, before stepping quietly off the wheel of success.

Since succeeding Sir Peter Hall as artistic director of Denys Lasdun’s South Bank landmark, he has run a building with a staff of 800, and overseen 189 productions, including 65 new plays and seven West End transfers, 22 of which he directed himself. Several of these have crossed over to Broadway and beyond, prompting Frank Rich, New York’s most famous theatre critic, to describe him as “the most versatile producer in the English-speaking theatre”. He has also found time to give 32 Platform performances, write *Utopia and Other Places* – an eloquent account of his childhood combined with astute essays on theatre – nip across to Covent Garden to make his opera debut directing Verdi’s *La Traviata* (at the behest of the late Georg Solti), pick up a knighthood and listen to *The Archers*. Not bad for 10 years’ work.

Playing a character, as underlined by his (non) appearance in *Violin Time*, chimes eerily with his feelings when he began the job. In a rare, published excerpt from his diaries he described himself as “performing an act called Richard Eyre”. In the midst of rehearsals for the Stoppard play, he evokes his first year with a suitably theatrical analogy. “What you say about an actor who is inadequate to a role is that they’re over-parted. I felt over-parted at the beginning. I found it very, very tough, partly because I thought I could do the job before I started it but then, when I did start, it seemed so much larger, more lonely than I’d imagined.” A smile creeps across his lean, serious face. “I was well-inclined to back out. It was a toss-up as to whether to continue with the danger of ignominious failure or to resign in deep shame. Cowardice won out,” he laughs, sheepishly.

In a recent, rather bitter tirade, playwright and director Peter Gill attacked Eyre’s programming, suggesting that he’ll be remembered solely for *Gyps and Dolls*. It wasn’t meant as a compliment but thousands of delighted theatregoers would see that as a more than fitting monument. In the face of successive standstill Arts Council grants, Eyre renounced this money-spinning to a whirlwind of praise. Gill’s

protestations mark him out as one of a startlingly small number of dissenters. The first year was tough, as Eyre found himself having to carry out inherited job losses following a £3.5m cut in subsidy, but by the end of the Eighties he’d relaxed and his tenure is now routinely described as “a golden era”.

That’s no mean feat. He has had to fill three auditoria, each housing three plays at any given moment. That means nine productions in the repertoire plus three in rehearsal, another 12 in the planning stage, plus touring, developing new writing in the National Studio, the burgeoning education department, not to mention the West End and Broadway. Most of his critics resemble reviewers of anthologies who complain about the exclusion of their personal favourites. A lack of classic European work has been noted, while others have frowned at the accent on American writing. Notoriously sensitive to criticism though he is – “journalists are not slow to point out a run of failure, by which they mean a couple of shows which aren’t up to scratch” – Eyre is sanguine about it. “By definition, the National Theatre has a sort of exemplary role. It’s a loaded definition I know, but there’s an expectation that it offers the best of theatre and satisfies all constituencies. It’s castigated for not being in the vanguard of new writing, or for not upholding the classical tradition. It’s expected to tour, or to present the very best in scenic design yet on the other hand not to be lavish in expenditure on design, and so on and so on.”

As his legion of supporters will tell you, Eyre, an almost diffident character, is the last man to sing his own praises. Much of the credit for the National’s success, however, is down to his taste. Genista McIntosh, until recently his executive director, describes this urbane man who is notably short of small talk in surprising terms. “A real showman, although *Gyps and Dolls* is an unusual example of his work, which is careful and austere in the best sense. He’s a very entertaining and funny man who enjoys being entertained, which is not in any way to make him sound superficial. His great skill as a producer is that his rigorous and tasteful approach is always on the edge of being subverted by a sense of razzmatazz.”

successful gambit of drawing in smaller companies with co-productions, companies like Jatinder Verma’s Tara Arts, Theatre de Complicite, Cambridge Theatre Company and Gloria. Eyre sees this more simply. “I always quote George Devine: ‘Policy is who you work with.’ What plays you do, who’s going to direct them, who’s going to act them, design them and so on. Those

Theatre productions *Dealer’s Choice* and *Closer*, feels he owes his playwrighting career to Eyre. He also admires Eyre’s directing skill. “I’ve never seen a badly acted Eyre production.” This probably stems from the relaxed rehearsal atmosphere observed by his regular production photographer John Haynes, who earmarks Eyre’s loyalty and intuition. It is those qualities which led him

then it corrodes you.” This article of faith has been force to battle with the need to balance the books. “Maybe I should have been more reckless,” he muses, “but one of the reasons the National has survived is that I’ve recognised that I do something well, but other people do things better.”

His blend of confidence and caution creates the contradictory image of a pragmatic idealist, borne out by his articulate public voice. “Twenty years ago people were not saying, ‘Oh, isn’t theatre a fucking bore’? People weren’t being paid by the *Sunday Times* to write long pieces about Why I Never Go To The Theatre. So I felt I had to act as an advocate for the medium and the only way you can do that is actually on the stage. You’ve got to find the work that says, ‘Look, you don’t have to go to theatre, no one’s obliging you to, but if you do go, there’s an experience you can’t have anywhere else’. Yes, bad theatre is what you say it is but look at how many bad movies or bad bands there are. So I got very interested in Robert Lepage’s work, in Theatre de Complicite, in encouraging David Hare to play to his strengths, or Stephen Daldry doing *An Inspector Calls*. They’re all about people making the medium as expressive as possible and making an argument for theatre as a medium that can stand alongside Damien Hirst or *Trainspotting* and you could just hold up your head and say, ‘It’s not what you say’.”

Nevertheless, he concedes that bad theatre is peculiarly difficult to watch. “I know people who absolutely hate even being invited to join a community. The

point about theatre is that you go in as individuals and end up as a community. If you want to dissent from that you can’t do it invisibly. In a cinema, unless you go and assault the projectionist, whatever you do is not going to affect the performance. It’s a delicate chemistry but, when you get real theatre, the very air becomes charged up. You can go into *Leah* and take the temperature before it starts and do so again at the end and it’s as if every molecule has been electrically and emotionally charged. Now, I like that. Some people don’t.”

That kind of non-defensive confidence scotches any notion that he might go gently into that good night. Solti’s death has robbed us of their projected *Pelleas and Melisande* but he will film his powerful *King Lear* with Ian Holm for the BBC. He is also discussing a series on theatre in the 20th century, not to mention directing Liam Neeson as Oscar Wilde in *The Judas Tree*. Hare’s new play at the Almeida next year. He is also considering writing fiction, “to the horror of friends of mine who are novelists”. There certainly won’t be much time for regrets as he watches Trevor Nunn take up the reins. “What I won’t miss is what I call ‘the blocked loo syndrome’,” he confides, chirpily, “where everything ends up on your desk up to and including someone coming round and saying, ‘There’s a loo blocked in front-of-house’. To which you have to say, ‘Well, get out the plunger’.” *The Invention of Love* previews from 25 Sept at the National Theatre, London SE1 (0171-928 2252). Richard Eyre will be in conversation at the National on 29 Sept



The pragmatic idealist: ‘Maybe I should have been more reckless, but one of the reasons the National has survived is that I recognise I do something well, but other people do things better,’ says Richard Eyre (above photo: Nicola Kurtz), whose productions over the past 10 years have ranged from the hugely successful ‘Guys and Dolls’, recently revived (below left photo: PAL), to the latest sell-out, ‘King Lear’ (below right photo: Geraint Lewis)



Former associate director David Hare highlights Eyre’s theatrical archeology, the policy of resurrecting neglected classics which resulted in great evenings like *Rutherford and Son* and *Absolute Hell*. He also pinpoints a historical change of direction. “By the time he arrived it was clear that the staple post-war repertoire wasn’t working with the public. Richard is responsible for the invention of a new repertoire, a multiplicity of different kinds of theatre.” He’s referring to the highly suc-

cessful gambit of drawing in smaller companies with co-productions, companies like Jatinder Verma’s Tara Arts, Theatre de Complicite, Cambridge Theatre Company and Gloria. Eyre sees this more simply. “I always quote George Devine: ‘Policy is who you work with.’ What plays you do, who’s going to direct them, who’s going to act them, design them and so on. Those

to create a family of directors like Declan Donnellan (*Fuente Ovejuna*, *Angels in America*) and Nicholas Hytner (*Chario, The Madness of George III*) and to exclude certain directors who have gained popularity elsewhere but who doesn’t meet his exacting standards. “It’s only in the interest of self-preservation,” he says, self-deprecatingly. “You can only work in good faith. Trying to second-guess the audience is inevitably corrupting. If you say, ‘I know it’s not very good but audiences will come’,

FIRST NIGHT

Paul Taylor on Playhouse Creatures, The Old Vic, London

No, it wasn’t nearly as big a step as getting the vote in 1918. But it was surely a step in the right direction when, at the Restoration in 1660, women’s roles were at long last given to women rather than to boy transvestites. *Playhouse Creatures*, by April de Angelis, shows how, for these pioneering professional actresses, the new social and artistic freedoms came with distinct drawbacks in the shape of fickle, exploitative aristocratic patrons, audiences bent on treating female “theatres” as whores, and a men-only policy on financial “sharing” in the companies.

The piece could have been a grim whine or a thinly disguised Open University programme. In Lynne Parker’s zestful production at the Old Vic, it emerges as a wonderfully funny and gutsy evocation of life

on-stage and backstage in the attiring-room which, at the start, is conjured up from the past by Liz Smith’s timeless – and hilariously timed – crone of a dresser-cum-stage manager. Connoisseurs of Green Room bitching and of hoicked-up, ample bosoms will get as much out of this show as toilers in the field of women’s studies.

Sharp and witty, Ms de Angelis’s last play, *The Positive Hour*, was prepared to confront uncomfortable truths about the sometimes messy, divisive effects of feminism on female fortysomethings. Likewise, there are good moments in this look at a pre-feminist society when we shared victimhood signally failing to unionise the actresses. When Mrs Farley (Saskia Reeves) faces professional ruin because of pregnancy, her colleagues are

willing to help out by giving her a branch-pin abortion. But when she can’t go through with this, they recoil superstitiously from buying the fancy petticoat she won’t be needing so much in her future career as a vagrant prostitute.

The production is a practical as well as theoretical celebration of the actress’s art. Sheila Gish is in brilliant form as Mrs Betterton, the grande dame eventually pushed aside by nubile competitive juniors. Demonstrating how to convey emotions by tilting that flat pug-nacious face of hers to different clock-hand positions (“Shame at 20 to seven. Despair at five past 12”), she’s the hard-bitten, pedantic technician taken to gloriously batty degrees. But she’s authentically thrilling when she performs Lady Macbeth’s sleep-walking

scene in the in-period heroic manner. And hearing her talk with a sepulchral fervent nostalgia of the old days when she used to sneak herself on stage in powerful male parts like Iago and Hal, you get a tremendous sense of the frustrating inequalities in the repertoire that arguably persist after 300 years of women in theatre.

In the second half, the proceedings drift a bit, despite the fact that the agenda also becomes more obvious. We see, with Ali White’s Mrs Barry, the emergence of a tougher new breed of actress, intent on taking control of their careers. There’s the suggestion that playwrights, like Stephen Noonan’s O’way, are beginning to respond to female threats of non-co-operation if roles don’t precisely suit the performer’s requirements. But by the time

he finishes a drama tailor-made for Rachel Power’s Mrs Marshall, she has had to flee from the wrath and the accusations of witchcraft put about by her former protector, the Earl of Oxford.

My own face tilted to the 20 past 10 of scepticism at certain points (over the central metaphor, for example, you want to ask: were no male bears ever cruelly baited?) but, for the most part, it was positioned at the “heavenly abandonment” of six o’clock.

In rep at the Old Vic, London SE1 to 6 Oct (0171-928 7616)

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Girl power comes to the stage, circa 1660

Photo: Geraint Lewis

21/OBITUARIES

THE INDEPENDENT
WEDNESDAY
17 SEPTEMBER 1997

Bela Imregi

Bela Ivanicsko (Bela Imregi), fencing coach born Satoralkajhely, Hungary 25 June 1908; twice married (three sons, two daughters); died London 23 August 1997.

Bela Imregi was arguably the greatest fencing coach to teach in Britain since the Second World War; only different styles over the decades set a limit on the judgement. By the time he finally stopped teaching, in November 1991 aged 83, he had produced an Olympic and world champion, a world finalist, a world youth finalist and a countless number of other internationals.

His dedication to his chosen sport was phenomenal. In "Bela's" as his fractured English became known, he would say, "Necessary you sleep with sabre under pillow." To Imregi, fencing was not merely a sport but a way of life.

He was born in 1908 in the unpronounceable village of Satoralkajhely, in north-east Hungary close to the Russian border. His surname was originally Ivanicsko, but both he and his father made the name change in the early 1930s to avoid the Russian-sounding original.

He never fenced as a competitor, but enrolled in the famous Honvéd Club for fencing coaches in Budapest. He already excelled in other sports, having been ranked in the top ten of his country's decathletes and reached national level as a coach in both skiing and tennis. At Honvéd he not only passed out top in foil and épée but also at sabre, defeating the star sabre pupil 5-0 in the coaches' tournament at the completion of the course.

After he was awarded his Master's certificate in 1935 Imregi's rise was swift. He soon made himself a reputation for teaching women foilists, Ilona Elck, Olympic Champion in 1936 and 1948 and world champion in 1934, 1935 and 1951, being foremost amongst many outstanding pupils.

During the war Imregi was called up into a reluctant Hungarian army and was for a brief interval at the end of the war a prisoner under the Americans before being released when it was realised that he, along with many others, had been forcibly conscripted.

Back in Hungary, he continued his army career, becoming a major. He took an active part in the Hungarian uprising in 1956 and was a member of the revolutionary committee for sport. As such, he was condemned to death by the Russians.

With his family he fled to the West, and by the end of 1956 was in London, where he joined Salle Paul, then the premier fencing club in Britain. The reputation of Hungarians for sabre meant that he was asked by his new pupils for lessons in what was effectively his third weapon, and for the next 35 years that was never to change. He taught all three weapons, but Britain used him as a sabre specialist.

Not long after his arrival in Britain, Charles de Beaumont, doyen of British fencing and the then British team captain, called Imregi into moving to the London Fencing Club, Salle Paul's nearest rival. He worked there in a purely freelance capacity until the mid-1960s, without payment from the club, and had to ask his pupils to pay him personally for any lesson. The usual fee was six shillings. Eventually he asked for a proper retainer, which de Beaumont refused. Enough signatures were gathered to force an extraordinary general meeting, but de Beaumont would not give way, and Imregi reluctantly decided to move.

He was already teaching at the London Polytechnic in Regent Street on a one-night-a-week basis, but he now made it his centre of activities, eventually teaching from 5pm till 9.30pm four nights a week. According to one club member, LFC fencers were told by de Beaumont, "If you move to Imregi at the Poly you will not be picked for the British team." The threat worked, and Imregi had to build up his cadre of fencers from scratch.

To the Polytechnic he soon added Westminster School and Oxford University, and then Brookhouse School in Hackney, proving he could create schoolboy champions from the state sector as well as the private.

His list of pupils included Sandy Leckie, British champion at all three weapons, and five times at sabre; Richard Oldcorn (British team captain), Mike Strauss, George Birks, Peter Hobson, Ralph Cooperman, Sue Green, Linda Martin (finalist at the 1982 World Championships), Jim Philbin (five times national sabre champion), Martin Beavers, Steve Netburn (an American who lived in London, who under Imregi became US champion, was runner-up to Bill Hoskins in the Martini épée and reached the last 16 of the 1968 Olympics), David Eden (Commonwealth sabre champion in 1974), Katie Arup, Sue Lewis, Richard Jaine, Johnathan Lewis, John Zamo, Mike Price, David Martin, Rocco Forte (whom Imregi took on at Oxford and

encouraged to a top-12 placing in the National Sabre finals), Christopher Bland (another Oxford pupil, now Chairman of the BBC, who represented Ireland at épée in the 1960 Olympics), Andy Martin, Nick Halstead (team épée silver medalist in 1965, whom Imregi shared with Bill Harmer-Brown, his co-teacher at Westminster) and John Deanfield, sixth in the World Under-20 championships in Madrid in 1970.

Deanfield's result was the best ever by a junior British sabreur, and his career perhaps more than anyone's epitomises Bela Imregi's gifts as a coach. He was taught by Imregi from his earliest days as a Westminster schoolboy, and in 1970 won the British Under-20 and Junior Sabre titles. He was chosen for the British team the same year, aged 19. By 1974 he was the finished article, fast, tactically astute, and with such a complete technique that he would plan several moves ahead before scoring a hit. Only a bad knee injury in 1975 stopped his progress, although he was still good enough to make the Olympic teams of 1976 and 1980.

The telling point is that in 1972, in the run-up to the Munich games, Imregi took him to the Lake District with his family, giving him lessons free of charge throughout his summer holiday. Deanfield duly defeated the silver medalist - a Hungarian.

I joined the Polytechnic in 1977. I was already over 30, but under Imregi's tutelage enjoyed my best results, including Commonwealth and French Open titles. One evening, having won the British Sabre championship the previous weekend, and feeling pleased with myself, I went to the club for my normal lesson. Imregi sat me down and demonstrated that I had yet to learn the correct way to hold a sabre.

Imregi had little interest in personal advancement, almost none in financial compensation. Pupils would be invited back to his house in Peckham Rye, where they would be given lessons in his tiny garden or in the house itself: the ceiling of his living room was scored with the marks of ill-directed sabre cuts. Passers-by would also stop to marvel at the Peckham Park bandstand which Imregi regularly used as an impromptu salle, the clack of steel replacing more familiar melodies.

To Imregi it did not matter if you were of international class or just a club fencer; if you truly loved fencing then he loved to teach you to fence. In



Imregi: 'Necessary you sleep with sabre under pillow'

his latter years at the Poly, his roster of lessons for an evening would range from the club's many British team members to octogenarians such as Dorothy Knowles and Anthony Hyde or young hopefuls just starting the sport.

Imregi's ascendancy in the Sixties was followed by a period of relative exclusion from national squad responsibilities. His concentration on technique made some administrators feel his teaching was too static for the world of constant fleching and high-speed footwork. Despite this he accompanied the team to the Munich Olympics in an unofficial capacity.

Up until shortly before the 1976 Olympics he was once again the National Sabre Coach but on the direction of the Sabre Committee was superseded by their newly arrived protégé from Hungary only months before the games. Typically, Imregi was not invited to the games themselves and watched what was available on television.

Bela Imregi was stubborn, quick to anger and passionate in his beliefs. You crossed him at your peril, and once crossed Imregi was slow to forgive. He had a formidable list of enemies, even if the perpetrators them-

selves were ignorant of their elevation. He was also generous to a fault to his pupils, and endlessly loyal.

Beneath those famous beetle eyebrows the eyes were full of mischief. On one occasion, when Jim Philbin playfully slapped Imregi on the back, the 78-year-old coach executed a perfect pratfall, seeming to die of an immediate heart attack. A few anxious seconds later he had jumped to his feet, delighted with his trick. Another time, in hospital for checks and with various tubes and wires attached to his chest, he pointed to them and observed "What this? One BBC? one ITV?"

But then Imregi's English was one of his trademarks. "Litty faster, litty faster" would ring out of salle or school gym, or, if a practice "stationary" fleche led to an incorrectly raised back leg, the admonition "What you do? Not one little doggy thing!"

He was three times married. His first wife died of cancer and his second marriage was dissolved, by which time he had two sons and two daughters. In 1957, one evening teaching at Paul's, he met Audrey Adams, a secretary in a travel office, and they married in 1964. It was often a tempestuous partnership,

but a rock-solid one, and Imregi at last had a companion who understood his devotion to fencing and who helped to make it possible. Their one child, Nicky, was the only one of his children who took up fencing seriously, reaching the Under 20 sabre team and the Olympic training squad.

Imregi never poached pupils: they came to him of their own volition, and if ever they entered the salle without first saluting in his direction they soon received the sharp edge of his tongue. A week of training missed, and one would be met with "Hello. My name Imregi. Who you?" He was not interested in his fencers winning: they had to fence well. Born into the Russian Orthodox Church, he converted to Roman Catholicism, and was a devout practitioner. But fencing was always his main religion.

Bela Imregi was buried on 1 September. At the funeral service, held at St Thomas More's, Dulwich, the Catholic priest who gave the address, Fr John O'Connor, told the parable of the talents. In Imregi's case, he said, it was particularly appropriate: Imregi had made the most of his very special talents, as both fencer and teacher.

— Richard Cohen

Philip Balkwill

Philip Graham Balkwill, schoolmaster; born Cobham, Surrey 8 March 1940; staff, Heathmount School 1961-64; staff, Charterhouse 1966-97; married 1971 Lesley Gregg (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1982); Mary Barter (née Francis); died Godalming, Surrey 21 August 1997.

When he appointed Philip Balkwill to teach at Charterhouse in 1966, Oliver Van Oss confirmed the adage that great headmasters make great appointments. Balkwill was himself a Carthusian, but Van Oss could have had no stronger supporter as he swept away a litter of dead traditions. Van Oss's belief that education was about opening hearts as much as minds could have had no finer exponent. To the end of his life, Balkwill embodied and enacted a determined idealism.

Born in Cobham in 1940, Philip Balkwill came from a literary and musical family. His father had played a fundamental part in the creation of BBC news broadcasting from Alexandra Palace; his father's mother, who worked for the publisher Jonathan Cape, had done much to further the career of H.E. Bates. His mother's father, Hugh de Selincourt, wrote *The Cricket Match* (1924) and was married to a concert pianist.

After attending Charterhouse, Balkwill read English at Oriel College, Oxford, then, unsure of his intellectual capabilities, taught for five years at a preparatory school, Heathmount. This time away perhaps helped him never to be sentimental about his own school-days or to use them to judge innovation; indeed, he very rarely referred to them at all. When he returned to Charterhouse, he had gained the confidence to be his own man. Though he did many of the standard schoolmasterly things, leading expeditions and so forth, and was to be a successful housemaster, his vocation was very specifically for

teaching, and teaching of an extraordinary kind.

Reading a poem with him was, simply, to learn to read. Pushing his pupils to think about every word, its meaning and its nuances, he brought even 13-year-olds to the point at which a poem as tough as Empson's "Missing Dates" suddenly became transparent. He then stood back. As George Steiner says, the classic text is one which reads us, again and again. Balkwill allowed his pupils to feel themselves being read by their texts with no mediation or direction from his vigorous personality.

Balkwill achieved this not only with his favourite Hardy, with Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Coleridge, Larkin, Heaney and, memorably, the American Buddhist Gary Snyder, but with Virgil. His teaching of Latin made even the most reluctant understand that Virgil had been a man putting one word after another, choosing one in preference to another. In the pursuit of clarity of vision, Virgil became, as in few classrooms, a dynamic presence.

One effect of his ability to withdraw himself was that he knew his pupils much better than they knew him, an unusual position for any teacher to be in. Learning slightly forward, he looked at the floor to think; although he put on weight in later life, the combined effect of hair which had greyed early, naturally high colouring and mischievous eyes was animated and animating.

It was obvious, of course, that he was not always an easy man: he was capable of both anger and bloody-mindedness. He did not always, as they say, bear fools gladly. Equally, he was capable of startling insight and kindness. So far as he subscribed to any philosophy - he had no interest in politics - it was to a Forsterian liberalism of the most trenchant kind. This implied an absolute respect for others as individuals, together with a hatred of cruelty, an irreverent sense of humour and a severe mistrust of authority.

He loathed feeling that he ought to lock his front door, because it diminished the joy of life. That joy, expressed in his love of his family, of literature, of mushrooms, of music, of cooking, of "ludicrously cheap" (routinely expensive) wines, of railways, was the greatest gift he gave.

The utterly uncomplaining courage and faith with which he endured cancer for the last 18 months of his life were of a piece with his uncompromising generosity as a teacher and as a friend.

— Lachlan Mackinnon



Balkwill: animating

Nancy Balfour

Nancy Balfour, journalist and arts administrator; born 17 May 1911; staff, BBC North American Service 1945-48; staff, Economist 1948-72; Assistant Editor with responsibility for American Survey 1954-72; OBE 1965; Honorary Treasurer, Contemporary Art Society 1971-74; Chairman 1976-82; President 1984-97; Vice-Chairman, Crafts Council 1983-85; died 29 August 1997.

Nancy Balfour devoted her professional life to the *Economist*; she was deeply involved in its post-war innovative and broadly based analysis of social as well as economic affairs. Her fine appreciation of cultural policy issues internationally was also reflected in the magazine's surveys.

Conventional as she was in her appearance - that of an educated spinster, when the term

spinster was often a short-hand way of describing the high-flying female achiever - it was perhaps a surprise to some that her profound pleasure was to apply her substantial pragmatic and managerial skills in the creative service of the contemporary art world.

Of American descent, British residence, and independent means, she listed her recreations as "sightseeing, ancient and modern; visiting living artists". She retired a few years early from her prominent but anonymous position as the editor of the American section of the *Economist* to work as a full-time volunteer in the arts, notably as treasurer first, then chairman, of the Contemporary Art Society.

The Contemporary Art Society was initiated in 1910 by leading figures such as the Bloomsbury artist and critic Roger Fry, Lady Ottoline Morrell, and others; its purpose has

been to buy contemporary art outright for presentation to public museums and galleries.

Under Nancy Balfour's guidance, its finances stabilised; the CAS initiated a programme of disinterested advice for corporations making modern and contemporary collections; it pioneered cultural travel, and set up much of the pattern of events for members we now take for granted in the numerous Friends organisations throughout the country. She accomplished her self-imposed mission with persistent energy, taking everyone to task; she was not above going disapprovingly through the desk drawers of her CAS administrator. Her nickname, partly due to her short stature and her habit of taking verbal nips at her colleagues and associates, was "Gnasher".

Balfour loved a good argument; when fellow guests took each other to pieces over some

point or other at her parties, she basked in the verbal fireworks. She enjoyed telling people what she thought they ought to do to further the causes nearest her heart; but she appreciated debate, discussion and disagreement.

For her 70th birthday, artists she had supported and befriended produced a wonderful book of original drawings; the CAS masterminded an 80th birthday party at the Tate, amongst the earliest beneficiaries of CAS largesse; and her 85th was a major art-world turn-out at the Serpentine.

She tirelessly introduced people of like interests to each other, and consciously linked the cultures of the United States and Britain. After her retirement from both the *Economist* and the CAS, she spent a year at the Kennedy Centre at Harvard.

Nancy Balfour lived in an

ample flat in Eaton Square, where her extensive collection of contemporary art, almost exclusively British, was displayed in a domestic context. Most pieces were on a relatively small scale, and she delighted in purchasing the new and upcoming as well as 20th-century classics from Henry Moore to Nicholas Pope. She travelled extensively, and knew private collections and collectors throughout the West, as well as visiting the widest range of public collections.

Until her last months she was undeterred from visiting the most obscure and inaccessible exhibitions and artists' studios, often pressing friends into chauffeuring duties; she never drove, and enjoyed remarkable and robust good health; disliking the country, she was an indefatigable city walker. She was always carefully dressed in beautifully made bespoke cos-

tumes from a royal couturier, and until the end of her life her hair was tinted a gentle bronze gold.

Plain in looks, she attributed her originality and idiosyncrasy to what had obviously been an early childhood experience of difference: her mother held strong views as to dress, and the young Nancy wore socks of a different colour to those of all the other girls in her school. This early branding may explain the impulse behind her commitment to what was once the unfashionable side of the art world. She was a devoted undergraduate at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, in the 1930s, and remained involved with and generous to her old college, heading its old girls' association for many years.

Spirited, cantankerous, Nancy Balfour was a bridge between private and public support of both the contemporary fine and applied arts. Dedicated to

the most practical manifestations of private support, she was a missionary, encouraging the *Economist* itself to build an art collection and to use the terraces and foyer of its Smithson-designed building for contemporary exhibitions, and she was a tenacious supporter of public art partly through her work for the Public Art Development Trust (as trustee, 1983-91).

Although she was on many committees, Balfour's contributions in public were often muted; behind the scenes she was indefatigable, and her own trust gave quiet and unpublished support. Her ferocious intelligence and frank, sometimes even hectoring conversation, were a combination that could be daunting, but she had a wide and varied circle of friends, and was a support and inspiration throughout the art world and beyond.

— Marina Vayzay



'Gnasher': Balfour loved a good argument

BIRTHS

DHALIWAL: To Drs J.S. and R.D.K. Dhalwal of Walsall, a son, Harpreet Singh Dhalwal, born 10.9.97, weight 7lb 3oz. Grandson for Mr and Mrs G. Singh and Mr and Mrs M.S. Upad. Nephew for Mr H.D.S. Upad and Mr J.B. Singh.

DEATHS

WHITE: Peter (architect), died 12 September 1997 in Cyprus, aged 66. Loving husband of Rose, father to Julie, father-in-law to Ken and grandfather to Peter and Andrew. He will be greatly missed. Funeral service will take place at 2pm on 22 September at Croydon Crematorium.

IN MEMORIAM

SMYTH: Evelyn, 1916-1997. In loving memory of our most precious and devoted sister Evelyn, died 24 August 1997. Walking through life with you, dear Eve.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

has been a beautiful experience - you have always made it so. We thank God for the privilege of having been your brothers. We will never forget you. God bless, love Jack and Dave. J.C.

Announcements for Births, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding announcements, in Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, (telephone 0171-238 2011 or fax 0171-238 2010, and see charge at £4.50 a line (VAT extra).

Forthcoming marriages

Mr P.N. Denison and Miss V.L.A. Wood. The engagement is announced between Peter, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Denison, of Marlow, Buckinghamshire, and Victoria, second daughter of Professor and Mrs Christopher Wood, of Farnham, Surrey, London.

Birthdays

Professor Sir Donald Acheson, former Chief Medical Officer, Departments of Health and Social Security, 71; Miss Anne Bancroft, actress, 66; The Right Rev Timothy Bavin, former Bishop of Portsmouth, 62; Mr David Binley, choreographer, 40;

Professor Alec Broers, Vice-President, Cambridge University, 59; Mr Russell Brown MP, 46; Marshal of the RAF Lord Craig of Radley, 68; Mr Donald Cruickshank, Director-General, Ofel, 55; General Sir Kenneth Darling, former Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces, Northern Europe, 88; Miss Jennifer Dickson, artist and photographer, 61; Sir Desmond Fennell, former High Court judge, 64; Mr Gwyn Francis, former Director-General, the Forestry Commission, 67; Sir Richard Gaskell, former President, Law Society, 61; Professor Sir John Hale, historian, 74; Sir Desmond Heap, solicitor and authority on Planning Law, 90; Miss Angela Heylin, chairman, Charles Barker, 54; Mr Damon Hill, racing driver, 37; Mr Michael Jack MP, 51; Miss Tina Jowell MP, Minister for Public Health, 50; Mr

Desmond Lynam, journalist and broadcaster, 58; Mr Roddy McDowell, film actor, 69; Mr Reginald Marsh, actor, 71; Mr Brian Matthew, radio presenter, 69; Mr Stirling Moss, racing driver, 68; Sir Paul Newall, former Lord Mayor of London, 63; Mr Andrew Reed MP, 33; Miss Dinah Sheridan, actress, 77; Miss Mary Stewart (Lady Stewart), historical novelist, 81; Sir Jack Stewart-Clark, MBE, 68; Miss Karen Straker, show-jumper, 33; Miss Helen Vinos, actress, 90; Dr Elizabeth Wilkinson, former Professor of German, University College London, 88.

Anniversaries

Births Samuel Prout, water-colour painter, 1783; Edward William Lane, translator of *The Thousand and One Nights*, 1801; William Carlos Wil-

iams, poet, 1883; Sir Francis Charles Clive, politician, 1901; Sir Frederick Ashton, choreographer, 1906. Deaths: Tobias George Smollett, novelist, 1771; Walter Savage Landor, author, 1864; William Henry Fox Talbot, photographic pioneer, 1877; Elsie Mary Dell (Mrs G.T. Savage), romantic novelist, 1939; Katherine Anne Porter, novelist, 1980; Professor Sir Karl Raimund Popper, philosopher, 1994. On this day: Edinburgh was occupied by the Jacobites under the Young Pretender, 1745; an English eccentric announced in a San Francisco newspaper that he had become Norton I, Emperor of America, 1859; the 1st British Airborne Division landed at Arnhem, Netherlands, 1944; Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, North and South Korea, the Marshall Islands and Microne-

sia were admitted to the United Nations, 1991. Today is the Feast Day of St Columba of Cordova, St Francis of Camporosso, St Hildegard, St Lambert of Maastricht, St Peter Abbot, St Robert Bellarmine, St Satorius of Milan, Saints Socrates and Stephen and St Theodora.

Lectures

National Gallery: Alexander Sturge, "Seurat's Drawings", 1pm; Richard Thomson, "New Heroes for Old: Military Academy Sandhurst, Canterbury, Surrey. The Duke of Kent visits Land Rover, and the Central England Training and Enterprise Council, Lode Lane, Solihull, West Midlands. Changing of the Guard. The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS. The Princess Royal, President, the Princess Royal Trust for Cancer, visits the Coventry Cancer Centre, City Arcade, Coventry, West Midlands; opens new Tenby Industries Limited Headquarters, Kings Central, Great Kings Street, Newtown, Birmingham; and is President, Riding for the Disabled Association, opens the refurbished office now named "Lavinia Norfolk House", Kenilworth, Warwickshire. The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, the Army Families Federation, attends the Annual Conference at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Canterbury, Surrey. The Duke of Kent visits Land Rover, and the Central England Training and Enterprise Council, Lode Lane, Solihull, West Midlands. Changing of the Guard. The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Wales's past can make a difference to Britain's future



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Wales is not a lesser Scotland. Its history, at crucial moments, has been remarkably like Scotland's - the early period of warring and competing tribal kingdoms; the unifying Christianity; the struggle to repel Edward I in his determination to unite the island; the uprising of Owain Glyndŵr, a little like a later version of William Wallace; the revival of romantic literary nationalism in the 19th century; the formation of a nationalist party in the 1920s... and a devolutionary referendum defeated in 1979, before this year's attempt. One can see why, intoxicated by their decisive victory north of the Border, Scottish and English ministers went to Wales to urge the people there not to be left behind. Even so, this was impertinent. The Welsh debate should have been more distinctive than it has been, and the nature of devolution, if it happens, will be quite other than the project planned for Edinburgh.

We go back to history, because we must.

The parallels with Scotland are interesting, and numerous, and intricate. Yet at decisive moments, the Welsh experience was very different. King Edward won in Wales as he never quite did in Scotland. Though Wales and England were formally fused by the Acts of Union in 1536 and 1543, most of the country had been effectively under English control since 1284. That meant that Wales lost out on the most crucial period of nation-building. Welsh law, for instance, was quite distinct from English law during the medieval period, and in some ways better too - it allowed wives more freedom and was less harsh on the poor. But, unlike Scotland which developed its own legal system for hundreds of years, Welsh law withered and died. With a longer English border, relative to its size, Wales was simply impossible to defend from steady English pressure. The Scots, from medieval times until the beginning of the 18th century, developed their own legal, educational, po-

litical and military infrastructure. The Welsh didn't.

Instead, the nature of Welsh resistance was spiritual and cultural, focused on the traditions of Welsh Christianity and the strength of the Welsh language. Wales developed a nationalism of the spirit, rather than political distinction.

That old Welsh history matters in 1997 for two reasons. First, it explains a lot about the lesser appetite for Welsh independence, and the weaker form of devolution offered. Second, it raises questions about what the proposed Welsh assembly is for. The project in front of the Welsh, should they choose to take the challenge, is not the rebuilding of a national political culture in quite the same way as the Scottish project. It is, rather, to foster and guard the linguistic and cultural specialness of Wales.

Why? Minor languages and small cultures are dying all around the modern world. They get less media attention than

disappearing species, but the rate of attrition caused by globalisation is pretty severe. If the French are worried about the longer term, what chance have the Welsh got? And why should the great swaths of English-speaking southern Welsh, often from English or Scottish immigrant families themselves, care two hoots?

There is an absolute answer, which is simply that small cultures contain reserves of human knowledge and wisdom which the greater cultures crush at their peril. This is not a winner-takes-all Darwinian struggle; all humankind is diminished by the death of slowly-acquired knowledge. This may seem an abstract argument indeed for political change; yet most of us, in some way, respond to it. Few people would deny that most surviving cultures are worth preserving.

But a more rationalist answer is that in the global market, every corner of the world needs its specialisation, its point of difference to exploit and sell. Wales has

a mix of traditions and skills which is not the same as those in Cornwall, or the Midlands, or Scotland. And a Welsh assembly would prove its utility by stressing, strengthening and marketing those differences to investors and customers outside. In short, if it worked, its effect would be like that of a Welsh cultural ministry and a Welsh development agency working together under democratic control. It would not feel like the wide-ranging parliamentary body planned for Scotland; but Wales doesn't need that or, perhaps, much want it. There is a lesson here for the English regions and Labour nationally, too. Devolution of power in our curious land is bound to be an asymmetric and ragged happening. Different regions will have different needs and should not be spatchcocked into a one-size-fits-all solution. We celebrate that raggedness. And we hope that, tomorrow, the people of Wales make Britain a little less uniform and a little less predictable.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number. Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

Diana's Fund

Sir: The tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, has led to a ground swell of public support for charities. But will it generate a new public mood towards the giving of time and money to charities and to those they serve in the long term?

Princess Diana's favourite charities will undoubtedly attract more money in support of their work - and rightly so. But what will her legacy be more generally on people's willingness to give? Will it differ between the old and the young? Between some of us and others?

The Memorial Fund, so quickly established in the Princess's name, was able to take appeals first on the Internet and only subsequently through banks and for a long time without the tax gearing. Spontaneity is seldom efficient and despite the fund's best efforts, the early days as seen from the inside were somewhat chaotic.

Should the Charity Commission not again review the lessons and procedures of crisis appeals as it did after the Penlee lifeboat disaster? And as they become increasingly international, how do you set up an efficient global appeal in 24 hours?

More generally, what will be done with the several hundred millions raised in Diana's name? Many good ideas are being generated and the fund's trustees and Gordon Brown are encouraging more. My own idea, like those of others, concerns the "excluded" - her "constituency". In Earl Spencer's memorable words. Each town or county might have a "People's Trust".

Those, like Princess Diana, wishing to enlarge and deepen their lives by helping the poor and the excluded in their own areas, could give or become involved through their local People's Trust.

MICHAEL BROPHY
Chief Executive
Charities Aid Foundation
West Malling, Kent

Recycling

Sir: I am glad that Polly Toynbee ("The battle of incinerators vs recyclers", 15 September) has no doubts about the value of recycling. Nor do I.



But first and foremost, we need to avoid waste where we can. Secondly, we should recover material or energy from as much waste as possible to reduce reliance on landfill. The fact that about 85 per cent of household waste takes this route, with about 6 per cent each to recycling and energy recovery, shows how non-existent is the "battle" she describes between the incinerators and the recyclers.

Britain has far to go to increase beneficial use of its waste: most successful will be a balanced approach - recycle to a sensible extent and recover energy from the residual waste, as they do in the greener continental countries.

A modern green power station is safe, reduces pollution and in no way conflicts with recycling. RAY PALIN
Director, Energy from Waste Association
London W2

New 'Independent'

Sir: Thank you for your new look. Today is only my second day as an ex-Independent reader returned to the fold. After a long flirtation with the Telegraph, I am desperate for serious, in-depth political comment, free from a gossip spin. Today's changes are refreshing and much more like The Independent's original spirit. Genuine independence with coverage of all views is surely the paper's strength. I am glad to be back.

SARAH EDEN
London W1

Sir: Being of a nervous disposition, I read your warning of a changing Independent with some trepidation. This "tougher for journalists and better for readers" concept, although reassuring for myself, had me concerned for the well-being of your columnists and reporters.

I've stayed with The Independent since it started when I was in my fifties and remember the short-lived weekly, "for the young and independent", of eight years ago. You still seemed to be looking to this readership and I wondered if it was now too old for you.

I therefore reached for the telephone to cancel my order but then thought better of it. Tomorrow would do. Well now I have it before me and I think you've pulled another one out of the hat, so will stay and wait for the opinions and the effect it may have on the other broadsheets. Perhaps we may learn what Stephen Glover and Andreas Whitlam Smith think you've done to their baby.

ROBERT VINCENT
Andover,
Hampshire

Sir: Having only last week re-

turned to The Independent from an increasingly loud broadsheet competitor, may I offer my congratulations on your quieter appearance this morning. As a music teacher I hear society increasingly //, hence welcome your mp layout.

ROGER GARRATT
Kibworth Beauchamp,
Leicestershire

Sir: Aw, shucks! While I commend your new, clean design, the teaser in yesterday's paper tempted me to hope that the whole Independent would be published in a physically more manageable format: a "tabloid broadsheet".

MARK RASMUSSEN
London E11

Sir: It is not uncommon to promote a new or changed product with a promotional gift and mine seems to be missing. I have failed to find the required free pair of spectacles in

my copy of The Independent to assist me with the reading this morning and I am therefore asking if you would forward them to me at your earliest convenience. T D M RAYMENT
London SW13

Sir: I can't imagine that Carol Twombly, "one of the world's leading print designers", will be pleased with the use you have made of her creation. The broadsheet is not suitable for fine light type with few crossheads. It dazzles and its minimalist body fades into the white acres. However compelling the substance, what is its use if we cannot read it. ASPHODEL P LONG
Brighton, East Sussex

Sir: It's changed. I now have. Brilliant. TOM DAVIS
Aldrinham,
Cheshire

Britain's republic

Sir: To demonstrate that a republic needs no figurehead, Spencer Hagard (Letters, 12 September) cites the first time Britain was a republic, from 1649 to 1653. It is not a choice which helps his argument, as during that long period Parliament did nothing else of note but to send Cromwell (of whom they were afraid) and his army (ditto) on infamous punitive missions to Ireland and to Scotland, the adverse consequences of which have been reflected in every news bulletin of the last seven days.

As well for them that they kept Cromwell abroad, because when he did return he at once took over Parliament personally. With armed soldiers he entered the House, arrested the Speaker, dissolved the Parliament, locked the doors and pocketed the keys. Shortly afterwards he formed a new par-

Scottish poll

Sir: Douglas Fraser writes (report, 13 September) that "the Scottish referendum results far surpassed the expectations of politicians and pollsters". Politicians maybe; pollsters? Not so.

The MORI Scotland survey for Scottish Television, released last week, reported on the first question 75 per cent "yes" (it was 74.3 per cent); on the second question 61 per cent "yes" (it was 63.5 per cent). Which pollsters did he have in mind? Clearly not MORI Scotland. BRIAN GOSSCHALK
Managing Director, MORI
London SE1

Sir: Is there any reason why England cannot consider reintroducing Daylight Saving now, since it was only the Scots who objected?

LORRAINE OWENS
London NW6

Muted horns

Sir: When the audience have finished with their Radio 3 couch sweats (Seen and Heard, 16 September), may I suggest the paper bag is recycled as a DIY mute on those par-pap car horn blowers who are a good deal more irritating than the occasional cough and who, annually, ruin the Last Night of the Proms? HOWARD INGRAM
Belfast

How to commit a howler in style: ask millions of viewers to Call your Bluff



MILES KINGDON

In a recent piece I said that it was not unknown for quizzes on TV and radio to get their questions and answers in a twist, but that I had had personal experience of only two of these in my own life, so I appealed to readers to supply me with examples which they themselves had witnessed.

I was not disappointed. Several examples have flooded in, including one corker of a mistake from Call My Bluff which is so good I shall have to leave it to last.

My first informant was not a reader at all, but the letters editor of this very paper, who rang me to say that he had once seen an edition of University Challenge in which Bamber Gascoigne was overruled on air.

One team was being asked a question about architecture; he couldn't remember what the question was, but he did know that the expected answer was "Norman", so the question must have been something like: "In what style is such-and-such a building built?"

The answer given was "Romanesque".

"I'm sorry, it's Norman," said Gascoigne.

At which point the other team interceded and said - rather like a batsman admitting that he had, in fact, touched the ball - that they thought that was near enough, and that Norman and Romanesque styles did overlap enough for the answer to stand. So Gascoigne gave way and let it stand.

The trouble, obviously, is that if the quizmaster has no flexibility, only a one-word answer, he is in no position even to defend himself. This was the problem, according to a reader called John Major (no relation, with Top Of The Form, which he describes as "that ghastly old Home Service programme... I can't remember specific cases but there were clangers nearly every week. Often the kids interpreted the wording of the questions far better than the question setters, and when the problems were vaguely scientific or engineering-oriented (I say 'vaguely') the Beeb seems to use only arts graduates' the answers were just plain wrong."

Scientific ignorance is cer-

tainly behind the point on a card I received anonymously from Stockport, which said, "Dear Miles. The saddest case of mispronunciation that I have ever heard was during a TV debate on the closure of iron and steelmaking in Cumbria. The BSC representative said that it was impossible to use local ore as it was 'low fee', and the union representative never asked him to elaborate on this. Clearly neither of them knew what they were talking about - the chemical symbol for iron is 'Fe', but this is always spoken as 'iron'. Both sides were just playing at it, for appearance's sake."

Anne Lewis, of London SW15, writes to say that although she cannot remember which show it was on, she does

remember a man being asked for the name of the German writer who wrote Faust. She remembers the man giving the correct answer, Goethe, pronounced "Gerita". She also remembers the quizmaster saying "No, it was Go-eath..."

Clive Exton writes feelingly with this memory. "One quiz gaffe I remember particularly well - because it seemed to encapsulate neatly the British attitude to writers - happened in Sunday Night at the London Palladium. The climax of the show was a competition in which a member of the audience had to arrange a number of words into a well-known phrase or saying. On the Sunday night I remember, the contestant ended up with 'The sword is mightier

than the pen'. And won."

And finally to the wonderful cock-up on a recent Call My Bluff. Over, with gratitude, to John Greensmith of Huddersfield...

"This happened about three months ago, when the correct definition of 'Knorcock' was given as an Old English word for 'next'. Having studied Anglo-Saxon in the past, I couldn't believe this; and my suspicions were confirmed when I looked it up in the OED in the library. "Sure enough, it said 'Knorcock - anglicised form of 'next'. But 'next' means, refer to the next word listed in the dictionary, which was 'Knorhan', the name of a South African species of bustard."

"In other words, 'Knorcock'

is the English name for 'Knorhan'."

Clearly, some poor innocent researcher had copied down "Anglicised version of next", and although a moment's thought would have told him or her that there is no way that the word "knorcock" could be any version of the word "next", he or she had clearly not bothered with a moment's thought and nobody had checked this odd definition. Were it not for a sharp-eyed Mr Greensmith, nobody would be any the wiser. Indeed, this may be the first intimation that the Call My Bluff people have had that they did commit a howler.

Ah, it wouldn't have happened in the old Muir and Campbell days.

Have you heard the one about the oriental fantasy?

The Booker shortlist, announced this week, is, in many ways, nothing but the same old story, the one about the Irishman, the Indian and the Antipodean, who seem perennially to be among the favoured few. So this year the likes of Roddy Doyle, Salman Rushdie and David Malouf step aside for fresh ranks of compatriots, namely Bernard MacLaverty, Arundhati Roy and Madeleine St John. The space for the required up-and-coming first novelist is filled by Mick Jackson. And there are a couple of places for solid writers with a track record, Jim Crace and Tim Parks, who – on the Buggins' turn principle – deserve a little of the limelight. In short, there is nothing revolutionary about this year's Booker judges.

Yet the choices are refreshing at least in ignoring much of the hype in the book trade about authors deemed a cert for the list. The fact that two out of the five judges – Jan Dalley and Jason Cowley – are long-standing literary journalists, means that the panel will have taken a jaundiced view of being bounced into certain choices by the books trade.

One casualty of this scepticism was John Banville, the Irish writer, whose fictionalised story, *The Unfortunates*, based on the life of Anthony Blunt, was bought by Picador for an exorbitant fee and pushed relentlessly by them as a natural for the Booker. The talking-up of Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love* may also have backfired. It's generally regarded to be a much better book than most published this year, but it is McEwan-by-numbers, running through many of his old riffs. The Booker jury, which includes two senior academics, Gillian Beer (who chairs the jury) and Dan Jacobson, is sufficiently well-read to be familiar with the previous work of well-known authors. The days when a glib celebrity, with little literary background, was recruited on to the panel to catch the public eye are long gone.

Not that the panel wants to seem too elitist. The choice of Madeleine St John's *The Essence of the Thing* is not only a huge surprise. It is also a nod in the direction of popular fiction, a genre which previous juries have stoically ignored. The novel dips into a world that would be familiar to Bridget Jones – of life in west London's Notting Hill and the aftermath of the break-up of a relationship. It centres on the life of Nicola, who is trying to put her life back together after the departure of her lover, Jonathan. The book is hardly ground-breaking in its ambitions and has been panned by some critics as clichéd. Its theme and location have, after all, preoccupied writers ranging from Muriel Spark in the Fifties through to Anita Brookner in the Seventies and Eighties.

It is perhaps forgivable that this book should have displaced Jeanette Winterson's widely tipped *Gus Symmetries*. Winterson breaks so many rules of conventional fiction and is so idiosyncratic in her style that she divides readers sharply between those who love and those who loathe her work. But it is harder to understand how Madeleine St John's ordinariness could have elbowed aside Carol Shields, a first-rate novelist, whose latest work, *Larry's Party*, has as its central character a forty-something man who is trying to make sense of his life. It demonstrates that Shields, always known for her skill in creating heroines, is just as adept with her heroes.

In one respect, however, the judges have made an indisputably sound choice. *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy, has, it is true, been hyped at least as much as the output of John Banville and Ian McEwan. Since last year's Frankfurt Book Fair, the manuscript has been heralded, amid a great buzz about the discovery of an unknown Indian genius. In this case, the fuss has been well-founded and been sustained through the ensuing months.

Arundhati Roy, though from a profes-



JACK
O'SULLIVAN
ON THE
IDENTIKIT
BOOKER
SHORTLIST

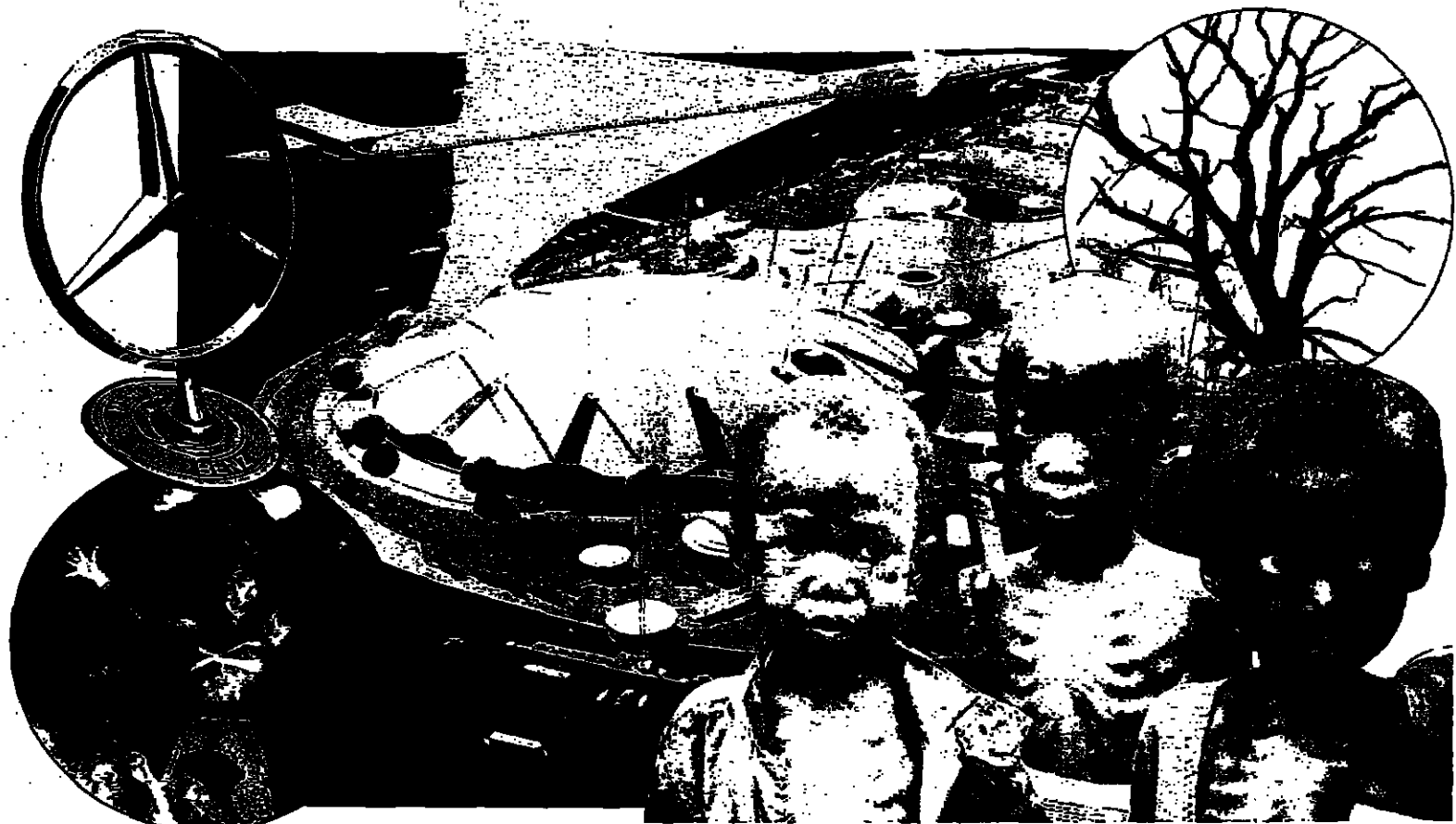
sional background, had until this book no experience of writing and publishing fiction. Her novel was an act of faith. When she wrote it, she gave up working in the film industry to write a book that had no obvious prospects. Yet the novel reveals that this writer, on her debut, has a fully-fledged style and vision. It has the flaws of a first novel, being in places over-written by an author in love with her own stylistic virtuosity. But it remains deeply moving.

The God of Small Things is also unlike the classic Indian novel in English, which typically appeals to Anglo-Saxon fantasy about an exotic land. Roy has set the novel in the lush landscape of Kerala in south-west India, but she does not pander to traditional orientalism in the way she presents Indian society. There is a distinctive autobiographical tone as she looks at the Syrian Christian community in which she grew up. The story is of a tragic marriage to a Hindu man of low caste outside that community. And so it reflects how her society is racked by conflicts between the energy of modernity and the demands of existing tradition. As the plot unfolds you see these issues played out against a very real, up to date world of bill boards, radio jingles and pop music.

If this week's shortlist reflects any key principle it is that which was set by Salman Rushdie the Booker winner in 1981, namely that the Booker Prize should be a major showcase for the varieties of English language fiction both within and beyond the British Isles, and not simply in the old metropolitan centres. This attitude acknowledges that the future of the English language is being forged in the Glaswegian dialect of James Kelman's 1994 winner, *How Late It Was, How Late* and among the Dubliners in Roddy Doyle's *Paddy Clarke's Ha Ha Ha* (the 1993 winner).

Experimentation with language can be found in Jim Crace's shortlisted *Quarantine*, which dramatises Jesus's 40 days and nights in the wilderness and attempts to create a language appropriate for first century Judea, without producing a pastiche of the authorised version. Likewise, in *The Underground Man*, Mick Jackson attempts to get inside the head of an eccentric and possibly demented aristocrat.

Thus, like many Booker shortlists, there is a sense of standard literary English being pulled in many different directions both historically and geographically. But the process of refining and renewing English is most innovative in Arundhati Roy's first novel, which is why this extraordinary writer deserves to win the plaudits and the £20,000 when the judges make their final decision next month.



If we can't get the show right, how can we sort out the century?

The Millennium Dome is going to happen. Look down from the 50th floor of the Canary Wharf tower (where this newspaper is based) and you can see the outside rim of the foundations, neatly fitting into the curve of the Thames. It will be an interesting, special building, as one might expect from Richard Rogers, now Lord Rogers, architect of the Pompidou Centre in Paris and the Lloyd's Building in London.

But what will happen inside it? We know that people, such as the impresario, Sir Cameron Mackintosh, are involved in what might be called the "spectacular" element of what happens in a central stadium in the middle of the drum, and that there will be other elements in the design around it. But what we don't know – and more important what they don't yet know – is what will be the Big Idea to underlie it.

Visually, both the physical surroundings and the show inside will be wonderful. No doubt about that. Get world-class talent to execute an idea and they will do it wonderfully, stunningly well. But without the intellectual glue of that central idea all that will result is a dazzling, empty, and ultimately useless, mask.

We had been writing along these lines in this paper, and to his considerable credit Peter Mandelson, the minister who has to make the dome work, suggested that if we were so interested we might haul in some people to a meeting where we might hunt the Big Idea. He would start it off. And so last week a group of the most thoughtful people we could collect from all walks of British life found themselves peering across the river from the top of the tower to the site of the dome.

As you might expect not one idea but a host of them emerged – far too many in fact. But there were some common themes which made us realise, I think, that getting this one right was important not just for the Government's reputation, not just for this country, but, if it doesn't sound too portentous, for the world.

To explain: stand back for a moment and ask what is special about this project. For a start the dome is within a couple of hundred yards of the Greenwich meridian, the single most important focal point in time for the start of the next millennium – the International Date Line, the other potential start point, wiggles through the Pacific, an awkward spot for a show. London itself is objectively the most international point on earth: the most visited city on earth; the one with the largest number of international air passengers and with the most international phone calls; the one which manages the largest amount of cross-border equities and has the largest foreign exchange market – and so on.

If it is a good place, it is also a good time – not just because of the resonant number of this 2,000th Christian anniversary. It is a good time because at this moment the world, Christian and otherwise, is going through arguably the most rapid period of change in human history. This decade human population is growing faster than at any past period and maybe any future one. Economic power is shifting from the old developed world to the new developing one. There are profound concerns about the pressure that population and economic growth put on the planet's resources. Technology, particularly in communications, is



HAMISH
MCRAE
ON THE IDEAL
DOME
EXHIBITION

more important than the changes themselves. Look at the way the invention of the car has changed our shopping habits, or the television our leisure time. Just as the inventors of those technologies had no perception of their social impact, so the inventors of the Internet can have little idea of the way it (and its successors) will change the way we will live in another generation's time.

The show will have to acknowledge the damage done to the environment, but it will need to explain that not all environmental change is catastrophic and that in some areas progress has been made in fixing problems. Tiny example: this year sea bass, that fashionable fish of stylish restaurants, have been caught swimming past the millennium site: technology has cleaned up the Thames.

The dome will also have to show awareness of the astonishing internationalisation that has taken place in the world. Ideas now whizz round in milliseconds; and people whizz round pretty fast too. Divisions have become vertical (between different types of people in one country) rather than horizontal (between similar people in different countries).

Above all, the experience ought to have a moral or even

a spiritual dimension. It comes ill from journalists or politicians who vie for the bottom of the league table of public esteem, but clearly people are hunting for something that goes beyond materialism and technology. Yes, the Millennium Show has to be fun; it must not be too earnest, too sure it is right. And of course it has to be for all people, young and old, and rich and poor, Christians and non-Christians, Britons and non-Britons, all races, all beliefs. But also it has to include an element of morality: why are we here and what are our responsibilities to future generations?

And that surely is the Big Idea. The future will have many features about which we should be truly concerned. There will be billions more of us sharing this globe. There will be environmental degradation. There will be grave social problems within otherwise rich countries. But on the other hand there are wonderful opportunities brought about by technology, better education, better communications and by the fact that the entire world is operating on a common economic system. What we must do now is create a future which is more balanced and more humane. If we can do that in the dome then we will have made a really useful start.

The social effects of technological change are often even

Arthritis Respects Nobody.



My body, Your body, John's body

John is one of over 11 million men, women and children in Britain today who know just how painful arthritis and rheumatism can be.

The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council is the only major UK charity financing medical research into all aspects of arthritis and rheumatic disease in Britain today.

We rely on donations to fund our many research projects. Can you help us today?

Please send me: Your FREE Legacy Information Pack ☐

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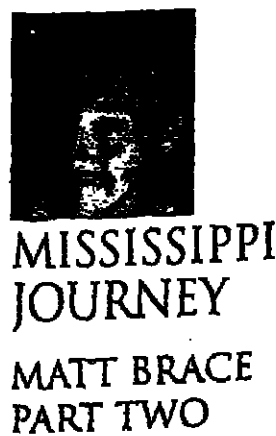
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YOUNG OR OLD - THE PAIN'S THE SAME

The fog was down. Lee talked about his iddy-biddy home



MISSISSIPPI
JOURNEY
MATT BRACE
PART TWO

2am in Dresbach Slough, on the Upper Mississippi, riding the towboat *JoAnne Sieghauer*, river pilot Mike Pope at the helm. Thick fog had forced us to slow the 3,200hp engines to a crawl. Ahead of us the three giant anhydrous ammonia barges we were pushing were hardly visible even with our spotlights full on. If there was a Mississippi moon shining on me I couldn't see it.

Mike knew the fog would be down until dawn. It had been that way both nights since the *JoAnne* pulled out of St Paul, Minnesota, two days ago with Captain Al Hicks, Mike, three bargemen, two deckhands, one cook and an English trainee boatman on board. I had got used to sitting out my 11pm to 5am watch enveloped in cold, damp Mississippi mist.

On our first night out from St Paul, Mike had been willing to keep the boat out in the 9th channel, using the reverse engines to hold her gently against the current. But tonight he wanted her tied off on the bank to give the horsepower a rest. Bargeman Lee Courville (the Crazy Cajun) from the

Louisiana bayous, Deckhand Steve Shiver (called Screed for reasons no one on board could remember) and I were shoulder-to-shoulder in the wheelhouse behind Mike, waiting for orders.

The fog continued to tumble down the bluffs along the shore and visibility worsened. "That's it," said Mike. "Ain't no way I'm running in this shit no more. It's time guys."

Outside, the night was all around us. A blue heron swooped out of the mist past my head, the cicadas hissed from the grass and river vapours clung to my face.

Lee led me down the wheelhouse steps and we hopped on to the first barge, picking our way along its edge. Fifteen feet below me swirled the black, silent waters of the Mississippi. We could not have been more than 20ft from the shore but the river was dangerously deep and the current strong.

I remembered Mike's first lesson on how to be a riverboat pilot. "The current comes out from the bank into the river. Don't forget that. Your lead barge will get pushed out if you

get too close." I could see the current running offshore as we stood on the barge rail, muddled in our lifejackets. The *JoAnne*'s engines roared as she tried to get close enough for me to leap off and tie her up but the river was teasing her. We did get in close enough once. Lee and I were at the very nose of the lead barge, caught by the spotlight. As we slid up the bank we were engulfed by foliage. I was ready to leap ashore and choke a rope (catch a line) from Lee but over the walkie-talkies Mike told us to wait awhile to see if she would hold on her own.

Lee and I fell to talking. He told me about his home town and seemed glad of the chance to remind himself of it.

"It's just an iddy-biddy little place," about 2,000 people. Kinder's its name. It's real nice. That's real Cajun Country out there. We're country people, most of us never been to a city. I ain't even been to New Orleans and that's just up the road. I like the outdoors, crabbing, fishing, hunting turtles. And good cooking!"

His great-grandfather had

migrated from Nova Scotia, so Lee grew up speaking equal amounts of Cajun French and English. "But now the young 'uns they don't want to learn Cajun French so it's going to die out, I reckon in the next 50 years or so."

It was time to tie-off but to which tree? At last I could be of some use as the *JoAnne*'s official arborealist. Hanging on to each other's lifejackets, Lee and I squinted at the options. A hazel. Too weak. A double-trunked elm. Too far from the shore. An oak. Perfect, apart from the fact that we had just dug out 2ft of bank from under it when we hit the shore, exposing its roots and rendering it much less stable.

It wasn't going to work. Mike would have another night holding her steady in mid-river. I walked back along the barges, choking on the ammonia stench and sheepishly hid in the galley. All I had to do was tie-off and I couldn't even manage that.

I immersed myself in the charts of the Upper Mississippi, learning the names of each stretch of river. Dresbach Slough was at Mile 704, mea-

sured from the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers just north of St Louis. Below us eight miles through the fog was Broken Arrow Slough, then Diamond Jo Daymark, Coon, Deadman and Catfish Sloughs, Sweezy Island, Hurricane Chute, Steamboat Hollow, Fever River, and Hanging Dog Bluff. It was as if Mark Twain had named them.

Part 3 appears next Wednesday.

Tesco raises stakes in supermarket banking battle

Tesco yesterday increased the pressure on the high street banks with the launch of a high-interest account which will allow shoppers to make transactions at the check-out. It is also gaining market share in groceries and fighting selective distribution agreements which prevent it from selling cut price jeans, branded sportswear and perfumes. Nigel Cope, City Correspondent, reports on the growing dominance of the big supermarkets.

Tesco's new instant access savings account, launched by the supermarket group yesterday, will offer an interest rate of 6.5 per cent on deposits of over £1. Though the rate exactly matches that offered by Sainsbury's Bank, which was launched earlier this year, Tesco denied it was escalating the supermarket battle with its arch-rival.

The company said that though it competed head-to-head with Sainsbury's and other supermarkets in the grocery arena, its real target in financial services is the high street banks. "It isn't about Tesco versus Sainsbury's here," said Tesco deputy chairman David Reid. "It is about the wider market and how a simple product offer can give customers good service."

Tesco's bank account will enable customers to pay in or withdraw cash at check-outs, or at branches of Royal Bank of Scotland. Tesco's joint venture partner in financial services, Mr Reid admitted that the service could lead to longer queues at

check-outs but said this would be monitored carefully. The bulk of transactions are expected to be conducted over the phone.

The launch is the latest in a series of moves into financial services by the supermarket giants. Tesco already operates a ClubCard Plus budget account which has 200,000 customers. Sainsbury's Bank, launched in the spring, now has 500,000 customers for its range of financial products which include a telephone based bank account, two credit cards and a range of mortgages. Safeway would not disclose how many customers had taken up the offer of its ABC bonus account which also pays 5 per cent interest. Tesco is considering further expansion into financial services with mortgages a possibility.

Banking analysts said the savings rates offered by the supermarkets groups were clearly better than those offered by rival banks but that the impact on the banking sector was difficult to assess. "There is clearly a market here for the supermarkets," one said. "What is not clear is how large that market is and how committed to it the supermarkets are. For example, how long will these interest rates be offered? It is easy to offer high interest rates on balances when your balances are low."

Tesco's announcement came as the group announced a 9 per cent increase in first half profits to £350m. In addition to its expansion into financial services, Tesco said it was keen to expand its non-food interests in areas such as newspapers and magazines, books and videos and health and beauty products.

Tesco chief executive Terry Leahy said Tesco was keen to stock products such as fragrances and branded sportswear if it could secure supplies. Tesco has already offered a limited stock of cut-price Levi



Terry Leahy, chief executive of Tesco (right), visiting the Brent Cross branch in Hendon, north London

Photograph: FT

jeans and Adidas sportswear. This was against the wishes of the manufacturers who said supermarkets are not the right environment for their products.

Mr Leahy said Tesco would attack selective distribution agreements and had made submissions to the UK government and the European Commission to outlaw

the practice. "It is wrong that there are selective agreements which seem to be aimed at keeping prices high," he said.

In the six months to 9 August Tesco recorded a 15.2 per cent increase in group sales to £7.7bn. Same store sales increased by 6 per cent pushing Tesco's market share in UK groceries from 14.2 per cent to 15

per cent. Tesco will expand further in central Europe and recently sent a marketing team to China to explore the possibility of opening stores there.

The home delivery trial which enables customers to order via the Internet is going well in six areas. Tesco will announce an extension to the trial shortly.

The Irish stores acquired for £641m from Associated British Foods in May contributed £14m to operating profits in the 14 weeks since the deal.

The dividend was increased by 9 per cent to 3.55p.

Tesco shares closed 5.5p higher at 441.5p.

BG courts controversy with £1.3bn buy-back

BG, the former British Gas, will today end weeks of speculation by unveiling plans to spend more than £1bn on share buybacks. The company will also reveal a strong improvement in earnings in its half yearly results.

But as Chris Godsmark, Business Correspondent, reports, the buybacks will prove controversial after the company's unsuccessful campaign to halt savage cuts in its pipeline charges.

Executives from BG first floated the idea of share buy-backs to analysts in June, following the defeat over price controls at its main gas pipeline business, Transco. Today David Varney, chief executive, is expected to announce a buyback costing around £1.3bn as part of a complex restructuring of BG's share capital, mirroring recent schemes by Southern Electric and Yorkshire Water.

Though BG shareholders will welcome the buyback, which would need to be endorsed at an extraordinary general meeting, consumers are likely to be surprised by the decision. Only last year the old British Gas attacked the new price control plans by Ofgas, the industry watchdog, as the "biggest smash and grab raid ever." Executives had repeatedly warned safety could be put at risk by the loss of £650m of annual revenues, translating into a reduction of about £15 off average domestic bills.

Speculation about possible buybacks has already fuelled a meteoric rise in BG's share price since Febru-

ary's landmark demerger, when the gas supply business hived off into a separate quoted company, Centrica. BG shares have doubled from a low point this year of 134p. They closed yesterday 1.5p lower at 268.5p, with dealers blaming profit taking ahead of today's interim results.

Mr Varney will justify the buybacks as part of a move to raise BG's borrowings to boost its balance sheet, a strategy adopted by many other utilities. The group's debt was already set to rise to £3.9bn by the end of this year, partly reflecting the £514m provision which will also be announced today to cover the windfall utility tax.

Through BG's gearing, the ratio of debt to equity, would soar to almost 200 per cent after the buyback, analysts said the company's pipeline revenues could comfortably cover the interest bill. Simon Flowers, head of utility research at NatWest Securities, predicted further buybacks could follow. "In terms of magnitude this would be very sensible. It will leave flexibility for more to come."

The buyback is likely to involve BG replacing its existing shares with two new classes of equity, some of which would then be purchased by the company. Such schemes, which reduce the amount of shares in circulation, have tax advantages over conventional buybacks.

BG will also reveal underlying after-tax profits of some £480m for the first six months of the year in another sign of the group's improving fortunes. The results will be boosted by a turnaround in the exploration and production business, which looks set to move from a £65m loss into a £112m profit.

However, BG is expected to make exceptional charges of around £100m to cover 2,500 job cuts recently announced at Transco.

Spottiswoode forced to investigate price cuts

Clare Spottiswoode, the gas industry regulator, is being forced to investigate and then report back publicly on complaints that British Gas's latest round of price cuts discriminate unfairly against 3 million low-income households.

The Gas Consumers' Council yesterday submitted a formal "referral" to Ofgas under the Gas Act, arguing that Ms Spottiswoode had broken her own rules in allowing British Gas to discriminate in this way.

The price cuts, due to be introduced in January next year, will be worth £28 a year to the average consumer or 9 per cent off the standard domestic bill. However, they will only be available to 16 million customers who either pay by direct debit or settle their bills within 10 days. Customers on pre-payment meters or budget plans have been excluded on the grounds that they are more expensive to service and unprofitable for British Gas.

In its submission, Sue Slipman,

director of the GCC, says these customers are being treated unfairly because the price cuts stem from reductions in the charges that can be levied by Transco, the transportation arm of BG. The GCC says that Ofgas ruled in 1995 that Transco's charges were "joint costs" shared by all classes of consumer and therefore the reductions in the charges should be applied across the board.

John Bartle, the industry minister, has also made known his unhappiness at the way price cuts are being introduced and is meeting Roy Gardner, chief executive of Centrica, the trading arm of British Gas, next Wednesday to discuss the matter.

Ofgas had said it had no intention of investigating the issue further. But the GCC's intervention will force it to conduct an examination. The investigation is likely to take at least three months which may mean that price cuts have been introduced before Ofgas has published its findings.

— Michael Harrison

Fall in government borrowing raises pay fears

The Government's finances were in such unexpectedly good shape last month that many City experts are saying the Iron Chancellor will keep borrowing below his £11bn target this year.

Diane Coyle, Economics Editor, assesses if the figures mean the government will have some extra leeway on public sector pay.

New figures yesterday showed that the shortfall between government spending and

revenue was £1.1bn in August, following a surprisingly big surplus in July. The Public Sector Borrowing Requirement (PSBR) in the first five months of the financial year has added up to £6.6bn excluding one-off privatisation proceeds, less than half the total at the same stage last year.

Economists in the City, who scrutinise the PSBR closely for clues about how much money the government will need to raise by selling gilts to the financial markets, described the August figure as "spectacularly good".

Part of the explanation was the receipt of an extra £1.4bn in tobacco duties last month, simply reflecting the timing of the

July Budget. However, thanks to the buoyant economy, total tax receipts so far this financial year have been nearly 8 per cent higher than last year.

More significant is the fact that expenditure by government departments is £1.4bn lower than at the same stage last year. If spending continued to fall at the same pace, this year's PSBR would be closer to £4bn than the £11bn target.

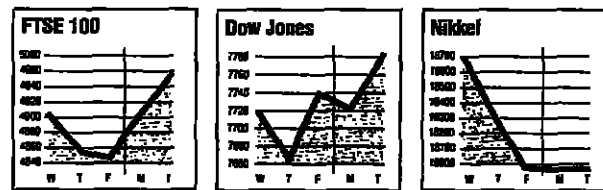
This is unlikely as one-offs such as the sale of the MoD married quarters and the Housing Corporation's loan book have shrunk expenditure artificially this year. Even so, a combination of falling unemployment and tight control mean

government spending might undershoot the plans published in the Budget.

Kevin Darlington, an economist at investment bank ABN-Amro, agreed. "It will still be a hell of a task to keep departmental spending down like this. But there could be extra in the kitty for next year's public sector pay bill."

On the day when Alistair Darling, chief secretary to the Treasury, insisted the government would be "fair but firm" on pay claims, the borrowing figures suggested that it might be in a position to offer more to high-profile groups like nurses, doctors and teachers, according to analysts.

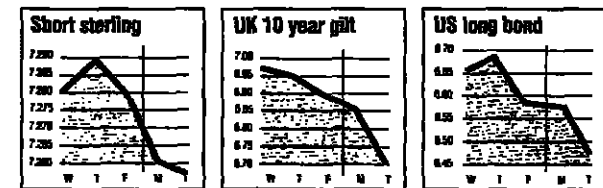
STOCK MARKETS



Source: Jones Vint and graph by Sun

| Index | Close | Change | Change(%) | 52 wk high | 52 wk low | Yield(%) |
|----------------|----------|---------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|
| FTSE 100 | 4976.40 | 73.50 | 1.50 | 5086.80 | 3900.40 | 3.56 |
| FTSE 250 | 4642.80 | 5.90 | 0.13 | 4728.40 | 4348.10 | 3.54 |
| FTSE 350 | 2363.70 | 29.30 | 1.24 | 2438.00 | 1949.20 | 3.55 |
| FTSE All Share | 2338.19 | 29.57 | 1.17 | 2476.96 | 1925.79 | 3.54 |
| FTSE Smallcap | 2278.1 | 4.10 | 0.18 | 2374.20 | 2128.40 | 3.24 |
| FTSE Fledgling | 1263.1 | -1.00 | -0.08 | 1346.50 | 1196.70 | 3.27 |
| FTSE AIM | 1014.3 | -0.90 | -0.09 | 1138.00 | 1002.10 | 0.82 |
| Dow Jones | 7796.55 | 77.31 | 1.00 | 8269.31 | 5667.74 | 1.67 |
| Nikkei | 17974.50 | 8.70 | 0.05 | 21612.30 | 17303.65 | 0.85 |
| Hong Kong | 14411.19 | -219.46 | -1.50 | 16873.27 | 11546.70 | 2.89 |
| S&P 500 | 3698.95 | 78.82 | 2.06 | 4436.95 | 2624.44 | 2.05 |

INTEREST RATES



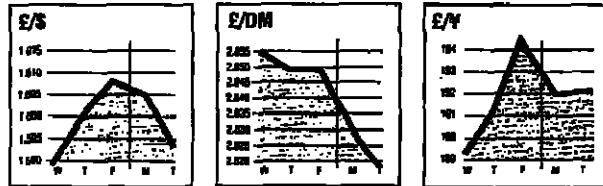
| Money Market Rates | 3 month | 1 yr | 1 yr 6m | 2 yr | 3 yr | 5 yr | 10 yr |
|--------------------|---------|------|---------|------|------|------|-------|
| UK | 7.28 | 6.43 | 7.48 | 7.35 | 6.70 | 6.44 | 6.42 |
| US | 5.72 | 5.06 | 6.04 | 6.02 | 5.89 | 5.57 | 5.10 |
| Japan | 0.99 | 0.08 | 0.64 | 0.69 | 2.19 | 0.75 | 2.84 |
| Germany | 3.30 | 0.19 | 3.70 | 0.37 | 5.58 | 0.58 | 6.22 |

| Bond Yields | 1 yr | 1 yr 6m | 2 yr | 3 yr | 5 yr | 10 yr |
|-------------|------|---------|------|------|------|-------|
| UK | 6.43 | 7.48 | 7.35 | 6.70 | 6.44 | 6.42 |
| US | 5.06 | 6.04 | 6.02 | 5.89 | 5.57 | 5.10 |
| Japan | 0.08 | 0.64 | 0.69 | 2.19 | 0.75 | 2.84 |
| Germany | 0.19 | 3.70 | 0.37 | 5.58 | 0.58 | 6.22 |

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

| Rises | Falls |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Reagan PLC 327.50 17.00 5.49 | Thorn PLC 137.50 -14.00 -9.24 |
| Brit Aerospace 1851.50 82.00 4.22 | BTG PLC 707.50 -47.50 -6.29 |
| LucasVarley PLC 223.00 10.50 4.94 | Lorha PLC 105.00 -5.00 -4.71 |
| Premier Oil PLC 45.50 1.75 4.00 | Palm PLC 428.50 -16.50 -3.71 |

CURRENCIES



| Pound | at 10m | Change | Yr Ago |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Dollar | 1.5838 | +0.020 | 1.5377 |
| D-Mark | 2.8182 | +0.194 | 2.8534 |
| Yen | 193.18 | +0.36 | 171.84 |
| £ Index | 99.10 | -0.40 | 86.10 |

| Dollar | at 10m | Change | Yr Ago |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Sheqels | 0.8274 | +0.026 | 0.8420 |
| D-Mark | 1.7879 | +0.111 | 1.5108 |
| Yen | 121.21 | +0.22 | 110.18 |
| £ Index | 105.50 | +0.30 | 97.20 |

OTHER INDICATORS

| at 6m | Close | Chg | Yr Ago |
|----------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Brent Oil (\$) | 18.25 | 0.15 | 20.65 |
| Gold (\$) | 320.55 | -3.10 | 353.35 |
| Silver (\$) | 4.71 | -0.07 | 5.05 |
| Base Rates | 7.00 | 5.75 | |

source: Bloomberg

Malaysia renews battle against speculators

The South-east Asian financial crisis intensified yesterday as the Malaysian government renewed its attack on currency and stock market speculators amid fears that the International Monetary Fund might withdraw support for the embattled Thai economy, writes Tom Stevenson, Financial Editor.

The Malaysian government yesterday stepped up its attack on the powerful hedge funds it believes have deliberately weakened its currency and stock markets. Anwar Ibrahim, the country's Minister of Finance, called for international rules to be drafted to "punish unscrupulous speculators".

Speaking at a meeting of finance ministers in Mauritius, Mr Anwar said efforts should be made to police the activities of hedge funds and other investment firms to prevent them destabilising national and international financial markets.

"He said: 'What is absent in the present international financial system is a mechanism to protect those who become victims of irresponsible buccaneering speculators.'"

Malaysia's currency, the ringgit, and its stockmarket have been badly hit by the currency crisis which spread through several south east Asian countries after the rapid depreciation of the Thai baht in July.

Mr Anwar said the IMF and the World Bank should address how to "deliver a major and substantive formula to protect emerging economies". He stressed Malaysia had a budget surplus and had already announced measures to increase this by making across the board cuts in expenditure and by deferring "mega-projects" such as new towns and dams.

His comments came only days before a meeting of European and Asian finance ministers in Bangkok and a high-profile IMF/World Bank meeting in Hong Kong, which begins in earnest at the weekend with a Group of Seven (G7) meeting.

The South East Asian crisis deepened yesterday after an article in Hong Kong's South China Morning Post warned that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was considering withdrawing its support for a bailout package for Thailand. That country's central bank governor had previously warned it may fail to match reform targets next year.

Chaiyawat Wibulsasdi said Thailand was still committed to honouring its obligations under the international bailout programme but he admitted that meeting a fiscal surplus target set by the IMF for next year would be difficult.

Negotiating its worst financial crisis for 30 years, Thailand received the first \$1.6bn of a \$3.9bn standby credit from the IMF late last month.

The payment was part of a \$17bn package supported by Asian countries led by Japan.

Limelight shares rise as Cotter quits

Shares in Limelight bounced 2p to 37.5p yesterday after the troubled Moven kitchens and Dolphin bathrooms group announced the abrupt departure of Stephen Cotter, chief executive, in the wake of last week's profit warning.

The move came as part of a damage limitation exercise to stem the controversy whipped up by the collapse in the shares from the placing price of 175p in November, when Stephen Boler, the group's founder, took the opportunity of raising £60m from the sale of most of his stake.

A spokesman "categorically" denied that there had been pressure from institutional investors for the management change, but Mr Boler, who had been a non-executive director, is to return to the group as a consultant. Last week he said

he would not take on an executive position at Limelight. He will now form part of a new operational advisory committee to implement an action plan for the business, which will also include Andrew Stanway, managing director of the Sharps fitted bedroom business, who is to replace Mr Cotter as group chief executive.

Mr Cotter, who is on an 18-month contract earning £230,000 last year, is still negotiating his pay-off, but it could end up being close to £350,000, if his contract is honoured in full.

A restructuring will see the Dolphin business, which has seen an "unexpected" sales decline recently, merged with the MKD division, which currently includes Moven, another poor performer, and Kitchens Direct.



OUTLOOK

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**FINANCIAL JOURNAL
OF THE YEAR**

BG becomes a dedicated follower of fashion

Today's widely expected news from BG Group that it intends to buy back more than £1bn of its shares presents this once troubled organisation with an intriguing public relations challenge. Having complained so loudly and bitterly about Clare Spottiswoode's new price controls, is Richard Giordano, the chairman, really proposing to turn round and say "only kidding. Actually we could have afforded a lot more"? This time last year he and his executives were claiming that the gas regulator's proposals amounted to theft, that they would destroy the company and endanger public safety. Now it appears that even after Ms Spottiswoode's saving, the company still has the odd copper or two left to treat shareholders with. Talk about crying wolf.

On the face of it, BG Group has quite a somersault to perform. The spectacle should make good sport. In the end, however, the potential for embarrassment here should not be allowed to get in the way of what may be a sound idea. Though a big share buy-back may seem a bit rich from the point of view of consumers (should this money not have been spent on yet further price reductions?), this is actually not the way to look at it. What BG is proposing is to re-jig its capital by replacing equity with debt. It makes no difference to customers whether capital is in the form of debt or equity. It's not their money, so why should they care? If the cost of servicing the debt is cheaper than paying dividends, then over the long term it might actually be to their benefit.

Like most modern-day commercial trends, the present fashion for buy-backs comes from the US, where they are now commonly used as a substitute for dividends. Already we have seen quite a lot of it here too, of course, but on nothing like the same scale as the US. Furthermore, there is still resistance in the City to the idea that buy-backs should be used as a substitute for dividends. Where the US leads, however, Britain tends to follow. Fee-hungry investment bankers are pursuing the opportunities with a whole battery of corporate clients and it could well be that we are on the verge of a veritable explosion in these things.

In the US, the thinking behind them broadly goes like this. Stock yields are now so low that companies need to find other ways of rewarding their shareholders. One way is to pay them in capital. There are also tax advantages in doing it this way since dividends are paid out of a company's net profits while interest on debt is paid out of gross profits.

With the abolition in the last Budget of tax credits on dividends, some of the same factors are beginning to come into play in the UK too. Dividends are now worth 20 per cent less to the big pension funds than they were before the Budget. In these circumstances both corporate and government bonds are made that much more attractive.

There are other factors too driving the big pension funds away from equity and towards bonds. The requirements of an ageing population and new government-

imposed "minimum funding requirements" are forcing the pensions industry progressively into the so-called "safe" investment of debt. In other words, there is a real and possibly unmet demand for bonds, while demand for equity may be on the wane. This is not to argue that the cult of equity is over, but it may not run as strongly as it did.

The buy-back is a logical consequence of these developments. In the UK, the tendency has been for companies to use cash or bank borrowings to fund these exercises, but it can only be a matter of time before the process finds its mirror image in a revival of the corporate bond market. What could be nearer than to buy back unwanted equity, then soak up the capital once more with a corporate bond issue.

A good racket for the City, obviously. The tougher question is whether all this gearing up of the corporate balance sheet is entirely wise. In BG's case the balance sheet is plainly capable of taking much heavier debt gearing without causing undue concern. There are obvious dangers involved, however. It all looks fine at the moment with interest rates relatively low and inflation in abeyance, but what happens in the next recession?

Today's good idea may well seem like a rather bad one in the cold light of the next economic downturn. Investors are only prepared to provide a fixed interest rate for so long. In the event of a prolonged downturn, companies will be queuing up to go the other way and refinance their

over-gear balance sheets with cheaper equity. For the time being, however, the fashion is for the plunging neckline and the City will welcome what BG is doing with open arms.

Brown should stay firm on spending

Might Gordon Brown have turned out to be too tough on public spending for his own good? So determined has he been to consign the Labour Party's tax and spend image to the dustbin of history that it looks increasingly as though he will not just meet but actually beat the Conservative government's expenditure plans this financial year.

This has certainly won over the City. The widespread reaction yesterday was that, with spending control this good, there would be scope to offer higher pay awards to key groups of public sector employees and still keep the PSBR on target. Most analysts have seen pay claims as one of the most likely sources of pressure for government spending, as the wage bill accounts for about a third of the expenditure total. Yesterday's figures suggest that a bit of this pressure can be safely released. Mr Brown won't want to trumpet this from the rooftops but even some one as parsimonious as he must know that a government that keeps stressing the importance of education will one day have to offer the teachers more money.

An extra 1 per cent on the total pay bill would cost another £1bn. Concentrated on particular high-profile groups, it could finance settlements generously in excess of the present going rate, about 3.5 per cent in the private sector. However, the good news on the government's finances is coming a bit early in the negotiations. If the Iron Chancellor is serious about keeping the lid on spending - and he has proved that he is - he needs to persuade all those aggrieved public sector groups that there really is not all that much to play for. His negotiating position would have been easier if the good news on the PSBR had been delayed for another six months.

There is an issue of economic strategy on top of the matter of negotiating tactics. To the extent that borrowing is below target because of the strong economy and falling unemployment, the Government should bank the difference. As Mr Brown pointed out before the election, at this stage of the last business cycle the Government was in surplus. He needs to resist calls to exploit the good news and loosen up on the purse strings, or he will find himself having to rein back again when the economy starts slowing down.

Even so, the public finances are plainly in much better shape than Labour was claiming before the last election. With the problem of the strong pound beginning to recede too, Mr Brown could hardly have hoped for a more benign economic backdrop to the Labour Party conference. He's yet to put a foot wrong and even the City is beginning to say "well done so far".

Pearson poaches top finance man from Dorling Kindersley

A strengthening of the management team at Pearson is being seen as a move to avoid a repetition of the accounting scandal at its Penguin. *Cathy Newman reports.*



Peter Gill, Pearson's safeguard against the appearance of 'black holes' in its books

Pearson has appointed Peter Gill, former group finance director at Dorling Kindersley, as director of financial operations, to tighten up its financial reporting and control procedures. City analysts said the appointment would safeguard Pearson from the appearance of any further "black holes" in its accounting systems. The company was forced to set aside £100m earlier in the year after the discovery of an accounting fraud in its Penguin subsidiary.

Meg Geldens, media analyst at Merrill Lynch, said Mr Gill's skills would "come in very useful". She added: "There don't seem to be any black holes around at the moment, but having someone who's been in a business which is very similar to many of Pearson's businesses will help them have closer control across their operations."

Mr Gill's appointment coincided with two other management changes. John Fallon, PowerGen's director of communications, will take charge of Pearson's internal and external communications and Paul Vickers, legal services director at Cable & Wireless, will have responsibility for legal and company secretarial affairs. John Makinson, Pearson's finance director, said the ad-

ditions were not just a reaction to events at Penguin, but he admitted they were designed to improve financial controls. He added: "We're obviously extremely scrupulous about strengthening controls in the light of the Penguin business."

Anthony de Larrinaga, media analyst at PaineWebber Gordon, said: "Pearson needs to tighten up its financial reporting and controls within the group. Mr Gill's appointment will enable Mr Makinson to think more strategically and to look at acquisitions and so on."

The news was unwelcome for Dorling which saw its shares fall 14.5p to close at 270.5p. The City was concerned about the exit of another senior member

of staff so soon after the departure in July of Kristina Peterson, chief executive officer of the US division.

A cautious statement about future trading from Dorling's chairman, Peter Kindersley, had also not helped, analysts said. Mr Kindersley said that although he was "confident" of future prosperity, there were "a number of challenges in the short term".

The group announced a 21 drop profits to £10.2m for the year to June, in line with market forecasts. However, a £2.5m exceptional reorganisation charge was higher than analysts had expected.

Mr Kindersley said yesterday cost-cutting would continue,

and there would be some redundancies. It also emerged that staff bonuses have been slashed in an attempt to contain costs. Staff have in recent years been paid an extra month's salary as a discretionary bonus at the end of the summer.

However, this year, employees have been given a flat bonus of £250. The company said the US, where turnover rose 17 per cent to £47.6m. The autumn publishing list was, Dorling added, "one of the strongest of recent years".

Shares in Dorling fell to 202.5p earlier in the year from a high of 660p.

American Airlines toughens stance in battle over slots

American Airlines yesterday warned Brussels that it would not submit to the curbs it is seeking to impose on its alliance with BA. *Michael Harrison reports*

The combative stance taken by American suggests attitudes are hardening on both sides as the long-running battle to get regulatory approval for the alliance from London, Wash-

ington and Brussels approaches its climax.

Mr Karel Van Miert, Competition Commissioner, wants BA and American to surrender 353 take-off and landing slots a week at Heathrow - equal to 25 round trips a day - and reduce services on some transatlantic routes as the price for approving the deal.

But Don Carty, president of American, said on a visit to London that it was only prepared to surrender about half that number, describing the Office of Fair Trading's recommendation that 168 slots be

given up as acceptable. He also reiterated American's insistence that it would not give the slots away for free, pointing out that it had paid TWA \$450m when it took over its services into Heathrow in the late 1980s.

Mr Carty also indicated that American expected the support of the US government in fighting its corner, saying that some of Mr Van Miert's proposals were totally inconsistent with US competition policy.

The US Under Secretary of State, Stuart Eizenstat, has said he would be concerned if

the conditions imposed by Brussels were such that it stopped the alliance going ahead and prevented open skies across the Atlantic.

"In terms of giving away slots we have reached the limit," said Mr Carty, adding that the price Brussels was asking was not one that it would pay.

However, he said the two airlines would not, as earlier suggested, walk away from the alliance if they were still waiting for regulatory clearance in November when they attend the bi-annual slot conference in Melbourne.

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Earnings premium for qualifications shows steady increase, says report

Education boosts your earnings. The bad news is that it might not help you get a job.

Diane Coyle, Economics Editor, reports that dole queues have become steadily better-educated.

Pay rises steadily in line with educational attainment, and the earnings premium for gaining qualifications has increased, according to a new report.

Women benefit even more than men in the extent to which staying on in education improves their earnings, although men on average are still paid a quarter to a third more than women whatever they have between their ears.

But one catch is that educational qualifications have become a less sure passport to a job as the skill level of the population has risen. The unemployment rate for the unqualified has changed little, while graduates' risk of unemployment is still far lower but has risen over the years.

A second drawback is the growing need for students to work to support themselves on the way to their qualification. One in four full-time 16-19-year-old students and one in five among the 20-24-year-olds also holds a part-time job.

"Pay is increasing in real terms for workers with a higher level of education, but barely holding up, if not decreasing, for people with low or no qualifications," according to the Employment Policy Institute's

autumn 'Employment Audit'. A woman with a degree earned £249.42 a week on average in 1996, nearly three times more than the £118.32 average for women with no qualifications. The gap had grown slightly since 1993, when the respective pay levels were £243.94 and £117.59 a week in 1996 pounds.

Men enjoyed a smaller return to their educational qualifications but at all levels of attainment earned more than women.

Last year the average man with a degree made a weekly £330.23, just over twice as much as the £242.67 earned by his unqualified counterpart.

Female pay rates have stuck at 75 to 80 per cent of the equivalent male pay level. A woman with a degree typically makes about the same in a week as a

man with 'A' levels or an advanced vocational qualification.

But a separate article in the same report, written by Peter Robinson of the London School of Economics, shows that while 59 per cent of the unemployed in 1979 had no qualifications, this had dropped to 39 per cent by 1996.

Unemployment rates for the unskilled have risen far less over the years than unemployment amongst the best qualified, although the former are still about six times more likely to be out of a job.

Mr Robinson writes: "Significantly fewer of the unemployed were unqualified in 1979 when compared with 1996, reflecting the large increase in the holding of qualifications."

NatWest keeps investors guessing as BAe leads blue chips higher

MARKET REPORT

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Blue chips enjoyed their best session for more than two months with Footsie surging 73.5 points to 4,976.4. British Aerospace led the climb although it was the performance of National Westminster Bank which intrigued.

For the fifth day running NatWest was in buoyant form. The shares have risen with the stock market in the past two days but, perhaps more significantly, they moved ahead last week, blissfully ignoring a decidedly jittery atmosphere.

Yesterday they rose 24.5p to 875.5p with a deepening suspicion there could after all be truth in the story, dismissed when it first surfaced, of a deal with the German Commerzbank.

The theory is that the Germans want to buy NatWest's wounded securities arm. Such a sale would cut away one of

the bank's problems and would be good for the shares.

Another yarn is that NatWest is on the bid trail, presumably taking the view it is better to grow from weakness than consolidate.

Commercial Union, the insurance group riding at a 762p peak with a 10.5p gain, was the chosen victim.

BAe, up 82p to a 1,651.5p peak, was propelled by a determined Merrill Lynch push and a 46-aircraft order for its Airbus Industrie associate.

The Footsie display, helped by US buying and a strong New York opening, also drew impetus from positioning ahead of Friday's Footsie expiry.

The power generators, bright recently, missed the fun. They were ruffled by indications that their industry regulator, Professor Stephen

Littlechild, intends to bear down on prices as well as cautious investment meetings. National Power declined 13.5p to 777p and PowerGen 7p to 572.5p.

Thorn, the rental group, had another dismal session with the adverse US court ruling lowering the shares a further 14p to a 137.5p low. BTG, after its run on the back of the hype over its new gearbox, fell 47.5p to 707.5p.

Lorha, the designer which failed to materialise, fell to its lowest for three years, off 6p to 105p.

The growing involvement with South Africa's JCI is causing unease. Lorha is planning through a quoted South African offshoot to buy collieries from JCI for £229m.

JCI, which at one time wanted to merge with Lorha,

is likely to use the cash to buy Anglo American's 26.7 per cent interest in Tiny Rowland's former vehicle.

National Grid continued to progress on hopes its Energis offshoot will be floated and the telecommunications group's cost-cutting link with Canada's Northern Telecom.

BOC, the chemical group, put on 17p to 1,077.5p with

Nikko advocating a 1,440p target. It expects year's profits to emerge at £621.5m against £550.5m.

Royal Bank of Scotland hardened 4.5p to 619p; it sold its 2 per cent stake in Spanish bank Banco Espanol de Credito, making a £30m profit in the process.

Newcastle United fell 3.5p to 120p on Sir John Hall's surprise departure; the shares were floated at 135p in April.

Black Arrow, the office

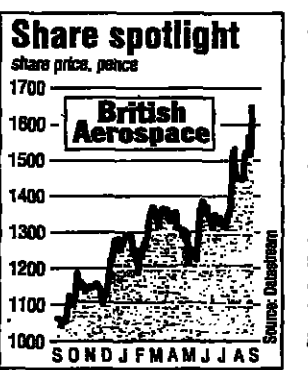
furniture group that last year enjoyed a sharp profit advance to £3.6m, gained 5p to an 88.5p peak. The company is looked upon as a likely takeover target.

Almame, the engineering group known for its beer barrels, put on 22.5p to 255p following a ninth consecutive profits advance; it produced £14.8m against £14.1m. BZW expects £16.4m this year.

Proudford, the management consultant, put on 2p to 27p. Four years ago the shares topped 120p. The company suffered a £3.2m deficit last year, largely due to a book loss on the sale of its US millstone.

Philip Crosby Associates, interim figures are due later this month.

There are signs it should produce a reasonable half-term result indicating, perhaps, £6m for the year.



TAKING STOCK

The battle between the Stock Exchange and Tradepoint Financial, the stock market in miniature, is getting more intense. Next month Tradepoint's order driven system will have to contend with a powerful Stock Exchange challenge when it switches to order-driven trading, as opposed to quote-driven, for the 100 Footsie shares.

Last week the Stock Exchange slashed its charges to undercut Tradepoint. But in a deal with inter-dealer brokers, which have nearly 10 per cent of its capital, Tradepoint has countered and is, in effect, now offering a free service. Yesterday Tradepoint shares edged forward 1p to 124.5, highest for nearly a year, as it reported its third-best session with share deals topping £16m.

In August, ahead of an £11.4m rescue package the shares were 65p.

Source: Bloomberg

Share Price Data
Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is the latest 12 months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by the year's earnings per share, excluding extraordinary items but including exceptional items.

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Ferguson considers the risk factor against bolt from the blue boys

A team of unknown Slovaks – apparently rudderless but with the notable scalp of Spartak Moscow to their credit – face England's title holders in a Champions' League fixture that will prove vital to Manchester United's European Cup chances. Guy Hodgson reports from Kosice

There are worse Champions' League scenarios than to land in a foreign country and find your opponents locked in bickering disarray. Not much is known about FC Kosice, but what can be confidently said about them is the Slovaks have managed to misplace their coach in between the weekend and tonight's match against Manchester United.

The official reason for Jan Kozak's resignation is ill health although local reports suggest any malady has been caused by internal politics. "Someone in the club is against me," Kozak told a Slovakian newspaper. "I have left so the players do not get involved in a power struggle."

Which would be music to the ears of United's manager, Alex Ferguson, if his experience against relative unknowns in Europe did not make him wary. Galatasaray were not household names until they dumped United out of the European Cup while Rotor Volgograd's one excursion away from obscurity came when they conjured a Uefa Cup win on away goals at Old Trafford two years ago.

Kosice come from the same bolt-from-the-blue territory. The first side from Slovakia to reach the Champions' League proper, they were reformed only five years ago and became the first side from Slovakia's second city to take the national title (either Czech or Slovak) in 100 years of trying this summer. Given that they also defeated Spartak Moscow to join United, Juventus and Feyenoord in Group B, it can be safely said that results did not figure in Kozak's departure.

His successor will be his assistant, Jan Bodnar, although that could be temporary. "He is coach until the president of the club comes back from a holiday in the United States," a spokesman said ominously yesterday. "Then it will be sorted out."

Troubled or not, Ferguson has been impressed with a team who supplied six players for the Slovakian national side last week. "Like a lot of Eastern bloc teams they are very stubborn," he said, "with some good technical players and others who are very strong. If you beat Spartak

Moscow you've laid your credentials on the plate."

Equally, if you lose five times in the Champions' League, including to Fenerbahce at home, your credentials to win the European Cup are suspect. United managed to do the above but reach the semi-finals last season and although the League phase of the competition is unquestionably harder – with only the group winners certain of going through – Ferguson is confident of doing better. Asked yesterday if his squad was stronger placed to

Spanish giants hold no fears for Albert

Barcelona visit St James' Park tonight, giving Newcastle a harsh introduction to the Champions' League. The Toon faithful will be relying on the experience of Philippe Albert, who has seen it all before in his days at Anderlecht. The Belgian defender is relishing the task.

Newcastle United may not have been this particular way before but Philippe Albert has. It was back in 1993, in fact, in the good old days when the European Cup did not overrun with runners-up, that the Belgian played his first game in the Champions' League. It was, he recalled with a wry smile, supposed to be the kind of baptism of fire he is expected to endure with Newcastle when Barcelona arrive at St James' Park.

"Yes, it was a similar situation," Albert said, recalling the night Milan, finalists in three of the preceding five seasons, lined up in Brussels against Anderlecht. The Milanese masters went on to lift the continental crown that season, bulldozing Barcelona 4-0 in the Athens final, but they came close to being humbled by the Belgian champions in the opening match of their campaign.

"People were talking about by how many goals we were going to lose," Albert said, "but at the end of the game Milan were happy with a goalless draw. We should have beaten them."

"That is why I am looking forward to playing Barcelona. At home, with a fantastic crowd behind us, anything is possible. With good discipline and with a big heart, we are capable of beating anybody."

With poor discipline, and with hearts possibly set on tonight instead, Newcastle were on the suffering end of an upset themselves at St James' Park on Saturday. Not that Albert needs any reminding. It was his failure to mark the debutant

Carl Cort which led to the 3-1 downfall against Wimbledon. To be fair, Albert was due a bad game. As the middle man in a new three-man central defensive formation, between Alessandro Pistone and Stuart Pearce, the man John Beresford christened "Prince" Albert had been in particularly regal form in the opening weeks of the season – the kind of commanding form which once moved Johann Cruyff to hail him as a latter-day Ruud Krol.

Cruyff, indeed, considered the factory worker from the Ardennes such a natural total footballer he twice attempted to sign him for Barcelona. On the first occasion, during the Champions' League campaign of 1993-94, Anderlecht were unwilling to part with their prized asset. On the second, the following winter, Newcastle were not open to offers for their re-

BY SIMON TURNBULL

cent acquisition.

"When clubs like Barcelona are supposed to be interested you do not always know if it is true or not," Albert said. "To be honest, I was flattered to see my name linked to such a big club but even when I was reading those kind of stories I was happy to be a Newcastle player. Hopefully, touch wood, I will be a Newcastle player for the next three seasons."

Kevin Keegan paid 131m to make Albert a Newcastle player – 131m Belgian francs, that is (£2.65m in Sterling) – after watching the counter-attacking defender score for his country against the Netherlands and Germany in the 1994 World Cup finals. Having played against Spain in *Italia 90*, Albert could be involved in his third World Cup next summer, Belgium being certain of a play-off chance at least. He is unwilling, though, to look beyond Barcelona's visit to Tyneside and the renewal of acquaintance with an adver-

sary from Newcastle's last European campaign.

Anderson Da Silva, in fact, was the last opposition player to score a winning goal at St James' Park before Chris Perry and Efan Ekoku followed up Cort's equalised goal in Wimbledon's victory four days ago. Da Silva did so for a Monaco team that sneaked a 1-0 win on Tyneside before overwhelming Newcastle 3-0 in Monte Carlo in the second leg of a Uefa Cup quarter-final.

The Brazilian centre-forward returns to Tyneside tonight as a £13m new kid on the Nou Camp block and better known to the football world as "Sonny" Anderson. The sobriquet, in point of fact, is "Sonny", having been bestowed by colleagues in his Marseille days because a walkman seemed permanently clamped to his head.

"I know he scored at St James' Park," Albert said, "but he didn't impress me. I hope he has the same type of game here. We were unlucky against Monaco because we were without a striker in the home leg. We had to play Rob Lee up front. If we had played with Alan Shearer, Les Ferdinand or Tino Asprilla we would have beaten them. They didn't do too much damage here, though we were well beaten in Monaco."

"It is similar now. I'm sure when we go to Barcelona Anderson will be a danger, with 110,000 supporters behind him. But we don't have to be as afraid of him here. I'm sure we will do well against him and I am sure we will do well against Barcelona."

"People are saying that there are not a lot of us who have played in the Champions' League, but it is the same if you are playing with your national team, and we have a lot of players with international experience now."

None more so than Stuart Pearce, whose hamstringing absence precipitated Newcastle's, and Albert's, fall from grace on Saturday. Given some vital psycho-therapy, the Magpies and their princely Belgian may yet be flying high in Europe tonight.



Philippe Albert: "With a fantastic crowd behind us, anything is possible"

Photograph: Empics

Francis calls for weekend internationals

Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager, has called for international matches to be played at weekends to avoid players returning late for League games.

Francis believes that mid-week internationals leave clubs at a disadvantage when players report back for domestic duty – often only 24 hours before weekend league fixtures. But he also feels playing World Cup or European Championship ties on Saturdays would also allow the England coach, Glenn Hoddle, to have the extra time he is seeking with his players the day after an international.

"I believe players could play for their club on a Saturday, meet up with their country on a Sunday, have virtually the same preparation time as now and play the international the following Saturday," Francis said. "Then, in England's case, Glenn Hoddle could have his day with the squad on Sunday to analyse things and then the players would report back to their clubs on the Monday with a full week to prepare for the following weekend's fixtures."

"But as things stand club managers often have players reporting back on the Friday before the Saturday game, possibly after a long flight which has taken the edge off them, with no time to prepare properly – and yet you are judged all the time by results."

"Tottenham played Arsenal a fortnight ago on a Saturday and then the international players left to go to their various countries and we didn't have the chance to work again with them until last Friday – 24 hours before the game at Leicester."

"If one or two players are away with their club then it is not a problem but when, as in our case, there were 14 players away for two weeks, it doesn't give me – or any manager in the same boat – a lot of time."

"It also gives little niggles and knocks little time to recover whereas having a full week after the international before playing again would enable problems to clear up and leave players not feeling jaded."

"You have got to try and be fair to club and international managers whose interests cut across each other now and create a level playing field for both which I think having the internationals at the weekend would help to create."

Kenny Dalglish, the Newcastle manager, expressed similar concerns after Faustino Asprilla turned up just an hour before the game against Bolton last Saturday after coming on World Cup duty for Colombia.

"Internationals should be played on Saturdays. The European Championships could be the right time to do it. Everyone throughout Europe, I believe, will think the same way," he said. "At the moment countries have players for five or seven days and we sometimes get 24 hours with them – sometimes

Dalglish pragmatic about taking on a Catalanian institution

Newcastle United may have passionate fans but such fervour pales alongside the obsessions that surround Barcelona and burden their coach. Simon Turnbull reports

Dalglish and his players with the Tyne Bridge arcing above them. Either a trick of photographic deception has been played or the boys in black and white are able not just to walk upon water but can stand on it, too.

Such has been the advance homage paid to the visitors from Catalonia, it would seem that Newcastle may indeed need miraculous powers when they make their Champions' League debut at St James' Park tonight. They are, after all, playing a club whose home

games attract the equivalent of the population of Norwich, whose season ticket holder No 108,000 happens to be the Pope, who run an art competition of such prestige Salvador Dali once entered, and whose squad has been valued at £400m.

According to the legend, and the club motto, Newcastle are playing "more than a club." Not that Dalglish sees it quite the same way. "We'll give them the utmost respect," the Newcastle manager said, "but we're not playing tradition and history.

We're playing the Barcelona team as it is at the moment – a good side with a new manager who has brought a new system that might still be a bit strange to one or two of his players."

Dalglish is not just one of football's great pragmatists. He happens to have won the European Cup three times, which is twice more than the venerable Barca and, indeed, their new guiding light, the former Ajax coach Louis van Gaal.

Tonight's match is a trophy in itself for Newcastle. For Van

Gaal, though, there was a reminder yesterday that nothing short of emulating Johan Cruyff, by putting the European Cup in the Nou Camp cabinet, is likely to keep him as Barca coach beyond next season.

Daubed on a board at New Ferens Park, the home of Durham City and Sunderland reserves, where the Dutchman had taken his players to stretch their expensively-insured legs was the message: "Welcome Home Bobby. All the best for Wednesday. SAFC groundstaff."

Unfortunately for the Sunderland club groundsmen, who prepare both the first-team and second-team pitches, Bobby Robson, a native of Durham, was in Cairo watching the Under-17 World Championship tournament in his capacity as Barcelona's head of recruitment. Lifting the European Cup-Winners' Cup and the Spanish Cup last season was not enough to keep the English coach in the driving seat.

Job security was the theme of the Anglo-Spanish press con-

ference Robson's successor conducted at Durham City club bar, the coaches Jorge Valdano (Valencia) and Vicente Cantatore (Valladolid) having been sacked three games into the season. Barca's Champions' League opponents did get a mention, though it was clear the prospect of facing Newcastle had not kept Van Gaal awake at night. "I always sleep well," he said, and with good reason. He does have Ivan de la Peña and Rivaldo in his team, not to mention the Pope on his side.

land Road – the last time the two sides met in a cup competition.

City will be boosted by the return of the striker Steve Torpey, who starts his first game since suffering concussion on the opening day of the season. Their Welsh international defender Rob Edwards faces a late test on a dead leg, but Sean Dyche is ruled out after knee surgery.

Sherwood urges his Blackburn team-mates to avoid complacency

Tim Sherwood yesterday issued a note of caution to his Blackburn team-mates ahead of today's Coca-Cola Cup second round first leg tie against their Lancashire rivals, Preston North End, at Ewood Park: "Remember Stockport."

The then-Second division side beat Rovers 1-0 in their third-round meeting at Ewood

Park last October thanks to an own-goal from Sherwood, in what was Ray Harford's last game in charge.

Roy Hodgson, the Rovers manager, has rejuvenated the club since he took over in the summer but the club captain Sherwood, back after an appendix operation, said: "We have got to get ourselves up for

it because it's their Cup final. If we play anything like we can, we should win the game but if we get complacent, they could catch us as you saw last season when we lost to Stockport."

Hodgson has rested Stéphane Henchoz, Jason Wilcox, Garry Filcroft, Patrick Valery and Colin Hendry for the match, though Hendry did

suffer a dead leg against Leeds on Sunday.

Martin Dahlin hopes to shrug off a cold and either Filcroft or Wilcox will play if he is ruled out but Alan Fettes is cup-tied. Ian Pearce returns after a calf injury.

Gary Peters, the Preston manager, declared that this was one match his players

needed little motivation for. "The game against Blackburn will lift all the lads," he said. "It's a huge game and the players are really looking forward to playing against quality opposition."

Preston's record £500,000 signing from Manchester United, Michael Appleton, is doubtful with a calf injury.

The England striker, Les Ferdinand, is a surprise inclusion in the 21-man squad named by Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager, for their game with Carlisle, despite suffering from a stomach muscle injury. Francis said: "Les will see a specialist in the morning but I'm refusing to rule him out at the moment."

David Howells will have a late fitness test on a back injury, as will Chris Armstrong on a groin strain.

Bristol City, of the Second Division, will be hoping history repeats itself when they travel to Eland Road for their meeting with Leeds. City beat the then-mighty Leeds 1-0 in an FA Cup fifth-round replay in 1974 at El-

Localities: Llandovery Castle, West Ham, Northfleet, West Bromwich, Bristol City, Chesterfield, Peterborough, Celtic, Dundee.

RUGBY UNION

Woodward finally given the reins for England

Clive Woodward's appointment as England's new rugby coach finally won official approval yesterday. Chris Hewett sees the curtain come down on a long-running sporting farce

More leaks than a John le Carré novel, more false starts than an Olympic 100 metre final. The bizarre kerfuffle surrounding the most important job in English rugby is over at last and, when the legion of players summoned to today's opening training session of the season converge on Bisham Abbey, they will find Clive Woodward waiting to welcome them.

The worst-kept secret in top-level sport finally made it into the public domain yesterday afternoon when the Rugby Football Union confirmed the former Leicester, England and Lions centre as its first full-time coach on a salary thought to be in the region of £150,000 a year. Roger Uttley will, as expected, manage the side. Both men have signed three-year contracts taking them up to and beyond the 1999 World Cup.

Having failed to lure Graham Henry, the successful Auckland coach, and Ian McGeechan, the mastermind of the Lions' triumph over the Springboks during the summer, the RFU turned to Woodward, only to find itself bogged down in protracted negotiations with his club, Bath. The contractual obstacles played havoc with the RFU's timetable - it had planned to finalise its appointments three weeks ago - and it was only on Monday night that the last lingering issues were solved.

Woodward, who had initially insisted on honouring his Bath deal, said yesterday: "The chance of coaching England was one I just couldn't turn down. The support I've had from Bath has been superb. But the West Country club made it clear that they would have preferred to keep their man. "We're extremely disappointed to lose Clive's services," said Tony Swift, the chief executive. "We would not have released him for any other role."

Bath have been compensated for their inconvenience - the

figure remains confidential but is thought to be in excess of £100,000. However, similar financial considerations have prevented the RFU naming Woodward's colleagues on the new coaching panel. John Mitchell of Sale and Rob Smith of Wasps remain favourites.

The current England captain, Phil de Glanville, was quick to endorse the appointment of the man who he admired at Bath.

"We are all delighted for Clive at Bath. We wish him well. He inherits an England rugby squad that is in a state of health, but there is a need to progress and it is up to Clive and his team to take things further and keep the success going."

"He was great for us in his brief term at Bath. We needed an outside point of view and Clive had forthright opinions. He is a deep thinker with novel ideas, but nothing is cast in stone. He is prepared to listen and has a stimulating view about playing the game and the England squad need to be receptive and positive."

"As a schoolboy I saw him play for England at centre - the position I have occupied - and he was tremendously skilful."

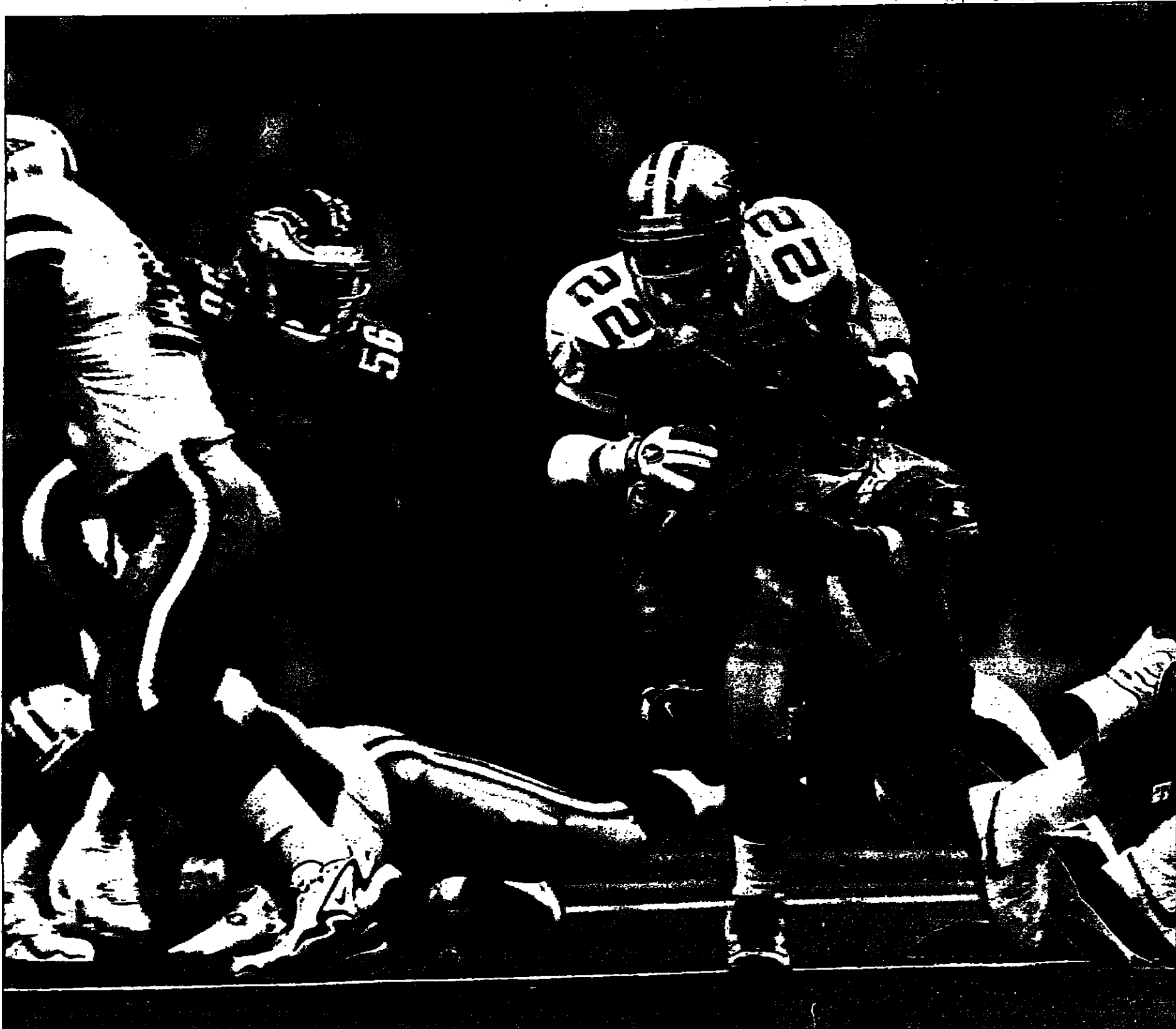
Woodward's former Leicester and England centre partner Paul Dodge described the new national coach as "adventurous". "He is certainly one of the more adventurous coaches around," Dodge said. "But we'll have to see how Clive copes at international level. It is certainly a big step up for him, and it will be interesting to see what emerges in terms of team selection and England's playing style. He's always believed in the 15-man game. Clive's record certainly speaks for itself."

Meanwhile, the directors of the Heineken Cup will meet in emergency session later today to discuss the implications of Sunday night's bar-room brawl between players from Brive and Pontypriid. Officials of both clubs have been told to file reports on the incident, which put three Frenchmen in hospital and three Welshmen before a prosecuting magistrate.

Brive's official request to have Saturday's match with Bath postponed will also be discussed. Bath have reacted angrily and insisted that the fixture go ahead as scheduled.

The ruthless Woodward way, page 31

AMERICAN FOOTBALL



Emmitt Smith, the Dallas Cowboys running back, powers on despite the close attentions of William Thomas, of the Philadelphia Eagles

Photograph: Stephen Dunn/Allsport

Miller's leap and Hutton's fumble see Dallas through

Anthony Miller leaped to catch a 14-yard touchdown pass from Troy Aikman with 51 seconds left on Monday night as the Dallas Cowboys rallied from a two-touchdown deficit to a 21-20 victory over the Philadelphia Eagles.

Even then, the Eagles could have stolen the game with a 22-yard field goal, but they made a hash of it. Tom Hutton, holding for Chris Boniol, fumbled the snap, tried to run with it, and was tackled by Deion Sanders in a bizarre finish.

Ty Detmer hit Freddie Solomon with a 40-yard pass to the Dallas five-yard line with

four seconds to play. The Eagles, who had driven from their own 16 following Miller's touchdown, called their final timeout.

It seemed Boniol, a former Cowboy, could not miss, considering he had made 46 consecutive field goals from the 35-yard line or closer. The snap was perfect; the hold was not.

Aikman, bounded all night by a tough pass rush, took the Cowboys 62 yards in seven plays for the winning touchdown. A fourth-down pass interference call on Charles Dimry set Dallas up at the Philadelphia 45. Replays showed the ball was tipped by

the Eagles lineman Mike Mamula and that should have negated the call.

Then Aikman, who had been booed in the first half, connected with the tight end Eric Bjornson on a diving 24-yard completion to the Philadelphia 17. Two plays later, Miller grabbed the ball away from safety Tim Watson in the back of the end zone.

The Eagles cornerback, Bobby Taylor, produced 10 points with blindside blitzes of Aikman that caused fumbles. Detmer threw a touchdown pass and Boniol kicked two field goals as the Eagles scented an upset.

Dallas, who had rallied from a 17-3 deficit in the second quarter, drove to the Philadelphia three-yard line late in the fourth quarter but Emmitt Smith was stopped on a third-and-four play. Dallas had to settle for Richie Cunningham's fifth field goal to cut the Eagles' lead to 20-15 with 5:01 left.

Ray Farmer recovered a fumble by Aikman on one of the hits at the Dallas 45, setting up Boniol's 49-yard field goal early in the fourth period for a 20-9 lead. Taylor struck again in the first quarter, only this time the Eagles cashed Aikman's fumble

into a 37-yard touchdown return by William Thomas.

The Eagles led 17-6 at half-time with the only offensive touchdown of the first 30 minutes coming when the rookie tight end Chad Lewis escaped for a 12-yard touchdown pass from Detmer with 9:31 left.

Dallas blew a 15-point lead

to Arizona last week and the Eagles upset Green Bay 10-9.

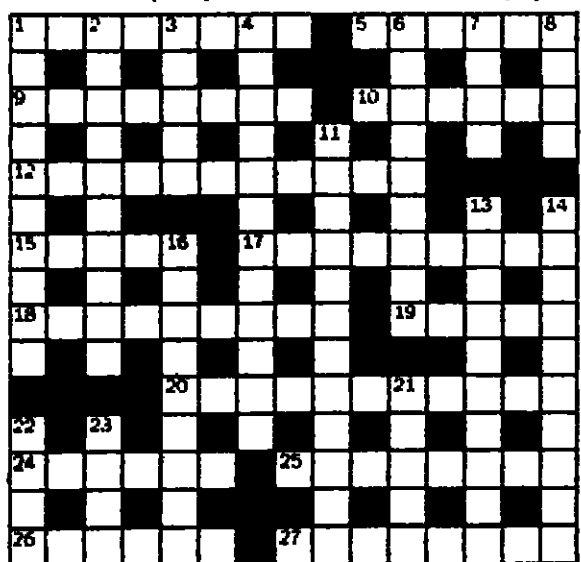
The Dallas offensive lineman Larry Allen pulled a hamstring and the defensive lineman Chad Hennings a groin, with both missing the second half. The cornerback Troy Vincent missed the second half for the Eagles with a shoulder injury.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No 3486, Wednesday 17 September

By Aquila

Thursday's Solution



ACROSS
1 Set off for school in time (8)
5 Book Three's about a Persian queen (6)
9 Girl originally plump confined to house (8)
10 Houses belonging to churchman's estates (6)
12 He is late in carrying dark, strong ale (5-6)
15 Helping mostly with correspondence (5)
17 Worn-out spouse in deadlock (9)
18 Oct update, perhaps, of palace revolution (4,5)
19 Old ascetic, a bit short, has to eat abroad (5)
20 Unusual Tehran mania for describing never-fading bloomers (11)

24 This artist got it right with a circle (6)
25 Rev up? (3-5)
26 Guard despatched by rail (6)
27 Strained puddings must be sent back (8)

DOWN

1 Energy English cad used up in corrupt behaviour (9)
2 Nothing impetuous here, notwithstanding having hawk in support (7-3)
3 Musical ensemble in which all fasted, we hear (5)
4 Christie's work at Prometheus Unbound? (3,9)

6 Deep breath? (3-6)
7 Army entertainer? (4)
8 Remainder of holiday (4)
11 The case for arms limitation (12)
13 Port of real smiles all over the place (10)
14 Came up again with harness fitted with air-holes (10)
16 Mr. Quelch was such a good painter? (3,6)
21 Shelter of red skins, say? Not necessarily (5)
22 Long time is grand in sea-trip (4)
23 Twelve in Japanese drama currently being staged (4)

FOOTBALL

Dortmund feel the heat

The reigning champions of Europe, Borussia Dortmund, face a daunting trip to Turkey as they start the defence of their crown. Transfers, injuries and suspensions have weakened the Germans, who are feeling the weight of expectation. Tommy Stanforth reports

Borussia Dortmund travel to Galatasaray in their opening Champions' League match today without the two players who scored the goals that won them the European Cup last May. Karlheinz Riedle is now at Liverpool and Lars Ricken is suspended, but the biggest headache for the new coach, Nevio Scala, may be the absence of Matthias Sammer, the international defender who plays such an important part in the Dortmund gameplan.

Scala's problems do not end there, however, as Stefan Reuter and Andreas Müller are also injured, while Paulo Sousa is suspended. With the core of the side missing it is little wonder

that Dortmund have not made the best start to the Bundesliga. Sixth after six matches is not the form of European champions and the pressure of expectation is clearly starting to tell.

But Ottmar Hitzfeld, the man who coached the club to victory over Juventus in May before becoming the club's director of sport, is keen to try to put their task this season into some perspective.

"We are among the favourites because we won the Cup last season, but we don't have the history and the experience of success that clubs like Real Madrid, Juventus or Barcelona have. To win a competition like the Champions' League, you need consistency and you need to be able to rely on your best players. At the moment, we can't but it's only starting," he said.

While the European Cup has never been easy to win, this season it will be more difficult than ever with a competition expanded to 24 clubs and including some of last season's runners-up. Only the six group winners are guaranteed a place in the quarter-finals next spring, with the best two second-placed teams joining them.

Galatasaray's Romanian midfielder Gheorghe Hagi is in no doubt that Dortmund are formidable and believes the Turkish champions can win. "We are in a difficult group, but we really want to get through to the quarter-finals and we have the power to achieve that," Hagi said. But Galatasaray are not without their problems as the team's trio of Romanian international midfielders will be broken up by the absence of Iulian Filipescu, carried off with a calf injury during a 2-1 win over lowly Antalyaspor at the weekend. Indeed, the Istanbul side has not had the best start to the season, languishing in - for them - a lowly fifth position and losing out 3-1 to arch cross-town rivals Fenerbahce last week.

As always, though, Galatasaray will be relying on the infamous atmosphere of their Ali Sami Yen stadium which worked in intimidating teams such as Manchester United and Paris St-Germain.

"They will be very intense atmosphere for the Dortmund game, but we will really need the backing of our supporters. With their help we'll bring a smile to Turkey," said Galatasaray's top goal scorer, Hakan Sukut.



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INSIDETO

18/MAY
Revelation that led Tavener to the abbey

21/JUNE
Wet nuns an

THE
Art, hype and Tom Lubbock new RA show

TODAY'S N

Unionists join

The Northern Ireland peace process has taken an important step forward as Unionist leader Ian Paisley and his colleagues have agreed to join the peace process. The Unionists are expected to face next week's election, and the peace process is seen as a key factor in their success. The peace process is a complex one, and the Unionists' decision to join it is a significant one. The peace process is a long one, and the Unionists' decision to join it is a significant one. The peace process is a long one, and the Unionists' decision to join it is a significant one.

Landmine ban

More than 100 countries have agreed a draft treaty to ban landmines. The treaty is a significant one, and it is hoped that it will lead to a ban on landmines. The treaty is a significant one, and it is hoped that it will lead to a ban on landmines. The treaty is a significant one, and it is hoped that it will lead to a ban on landmines.

Children bet

The London borough of Havering is taking steps to protect the children in some of its schools. The borough is taking steps to protect the children in some of its schools. The borough is taking steps to protect the children in some of its schools. The borough is taking steps to protect the children in some of its schools.

Taxmen in tro

Taxpayers have suffered badly from the incompetent government. The government is incompetent, and taxpayers have suffered badly from it. The government is incompetent, and taxpayers have suffered badly from it. The government is incompetent, and taxpayers have suffered badly from it.

SEEN & HEAR

A pensioner silenced the bull by smashing down the door. The pensioner silenced the bull by smashing down the door. The pensioner silenced the bull by smashing down the door. The pensioner silenced the bull by smashing down the door.

مكتبة الانوار